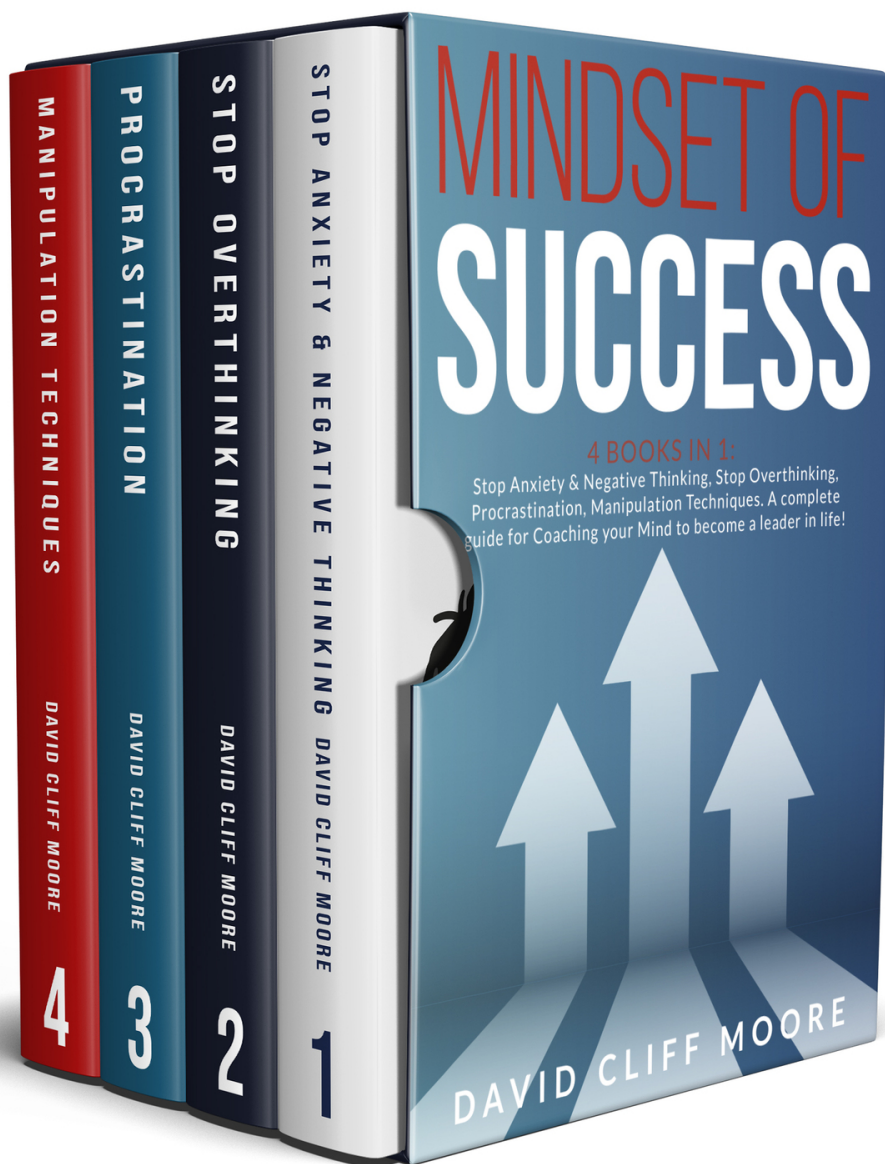




MINDSET OF SUCCESS

4 BOOKS IN 1:

Stop Anxiety & Negative Thinking, Stop Overthinking,
Procrastination, Manipulation Techniques. A complete
guide for Coaching your Mind to become a leader in life!

DAVID CLIFF MOORE

STOP ANXIETY & NEGATIVE THINKING DAVID CLIFF MOORE

1

STOP OVERTHINKING

DAVID CLIFF MOORE

2

PROCRASTINATION

DAVID CLIFF MOORE

3

MANIPULATION TECHNIQUES

DAVID CLIFF MOORE

4





Mindset Of Success

4 books in 1

Stop Anxiety & Negative Thinking, Stop
Overthinking, Procrastination, Manipulation
Techniques.

A complete guide for Coaching your Mind to
become a leader in life!

by
David Cliff Moore

© Copyright 2020 - All rights reserved.

The content contained within this book may not be reproduced, duplicated or transmitted without direct written permission from the author or the publisher.

Under no circumstances will any blame or legal responsibility be held against the publisher, or author, for any damages, reparation, or monetary loss due to the information contained within this book. Either directly or indirectly.

Legal Notice:

This book is copyright protected. This book is only for personal use. You cannot amend, distribute, sell, use, quote or paraphrase any part, or the content within this book, without the consent of the author or publisher.

Disclaimer Notice:

Please note the information contained within this document is for educational and entertainment purposes only. All effort has been executed to present accurate, up to date, and reliable, complete information. No warranties of any kind are declared or implied. Readers acknowledge that the author is not engaging in the rendering of legal, financial, medical or professional advice. The content within this book has been derived from various sources. Please consult a licensed professional before attempting any techniques outlined in this book.

By reading this document, the reader agrees that under no circumstances is the author responsible for any losses, direct or indirect, which are incurred as a result of the use of information contained within this document, including, but not limited to, — errors, omissions, or inaccuracies.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction

Chapter 2. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

History of CBT

Chapter 3. Negativity and Anxiety

Chapter 4. Assumptions and Core Beliefs

Identifying Dysfunctional Assumptions

Challenging These Beliefs

Chapter 5. How to Develop Daily Self-Discipline

Chapter 6. How to Master Your Emotions

Chapter 7. How To Get More Productivity

Chapter 8. Retraining Your Brain

Chapter 9. Emotional Intelligence

Chapter 10 . Golden Rules of Goal Setting and Eliminating
Insomnia

CBT Techniques for Eliminating Insomnia

Chapter 11 . Anger Management

Immediate Anger Expression Is Exceptional

Reasons for You to Express Emotions Immediately

Expressing Your Anger While Conserving Relationships

How to Deal with Passive-Aggressive People

When is Anger a Problem?

What is Unhelpful Angry Behavior?

Outer Hostility and Violence

Inward Aggression

Non-Violent or Passive Aggression

Steps to Take in Managing Anger

A “Should” Rule is Broken

What does one want in the long run?

Chapter 12 . Conclusion

Chapter 13 . Introduction: Social Anxiety Guide

Social Anxiety versus Shyness or Jitters

An Example Of Social Anxiety

Causes of Social Anxiety:

- Biological Causes

- Environmental Causes

Symptoms of Social Anxiety:

- Excessive worries

- Irrational and overblown fears

- Sleeping issues

- Resistance to social interaction

Effects & Consequences of Social Anxiety:

- Loneliness

- Constant Self-Blaming

- Lesser Chances of Success

- Depression

- Substance Misuse and Abuse

Chapter 14 . How to Improve Your Social Skills

- Persuasion and influencing skills

- Communication skills

- Conflict management skills

- Change management skills

- Strike a rapport

- Team-working

- Concentrate more on communication skills within social skills

- Assertiveness

- Myths or misconceptions associated with assertiveness

Chapter 15 . Overcoming Social Anxiety Disorder – How to Work through It

Chapter 16 . How to Deal with Stress to Get Rid of Anxiety

Chapter 17 . Dealing With Rejection

- Fear Takes You Out of the Game

- Fear Sabotages Your Confidence

- Fear Generates Defensive Hostility

- How to Interpret Rejection

- Philosophy of Rejection

You change who you are.

The Risk and Reward of Rejection

How to deal with rejection

Chapter 18 . Conversations

Developing One's Communication Skills

How to Improve Listening Skills in Communication

Characters of a Good Listener

Core Listening Skills

How Does Someone Improve Their Listening Skills?

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication Skills

The Pros of Verbal Communication

The Cons of Verbal Communication

How Does Someone Improve Their Verbal and Non-Verbal Skills?

What Is the Basic Feel for a Conversation?

Chapter 19 . Manage Shyness

Chapter 20 . Making Friends

Chapter 21 . Meditations to Boost Self-Worth

How Does Meditation Build Self-Confidence?

Do I truly make a difference?

What Can Meditation Give You?

Meditation Has Many Forms

Set the Mood

Give Yourself Time

Chapter 22 . Mindfulness Strategies to Overcome Anxiety

Becoming Aware of your Anxiety

Avoidance

Constant Reassurance Seeking

Overcompensation

Mindfulness Techniques to Enhance Self-Esteem in Social Situations

Recognize and Let Go of Assumptions

Personalization

Catastrophizing

Black and White Mentality

Chapter 23 . Dealing With Depression

Chapter 24 . Be the Best You

Meditation/Relaxation Techniques

Help Other People

Find a Sense of Purpose

Consider Following a Spiritual Path

Conclusion

Chapter 25 . Stop Overthinking

Chapter 26 . Why Overthinking?

Different Causes of Overthinking

What Are The Symptoms Of Overthinking?

How To Control Overthinking

How To Stop Overthinking

Chapter 27 . Procrastination

What Causes Procrastination?

What Kinds of People Are Most Likely to Become Procrastinators?

The Connection Between Procrastination & Overthinking

Chapter 28 . Mindfulness

What is Mindfulness?

Practicing Mindfulness

Incorporating Mindfulness

Benefits of Mindfulness

Chapter 29 . Resilience and Stoicism

Development of CBT

Thoughts, Emotions, and Actions

Cognitive Distortions

Stages of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Stoicism in Positive Psychology

Resilience and Fortitude

Stoicism on mortality and the Key to Living Fully

Chapter 30 . Mind Decluttering

Decluttering Your Mind

Minimalism

- Chapter 31 . How to Get More Productivity
- Chapter 32 . The Pitfalls Of Overthinking
- Chapter 33 . Concentration Power
- Chapter 34 . Confidence and Self Esteem
- Chapter 35 . Relationships and Stress
 - Understanding and Dealing with Anxiety in Dating
 - Things That Lead to Stress in Relationships
- Chapter 36 . Forgetting Your Past
 - Getting Rid of Your Junk
 - Forgiving the Past
- Chapter 37 . Strategies to Declutter your Mind
- Chapter 38 . Final Thoughts About Calming your Worries and Anxiety
- Chapter 39 . Conclusion
- Chapter 40 . INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY
- Chapter 1. Self-Discipline
 - Lack of Self-Discipline
 - Lack of purpose
 - Lack of goals
 - Negative Influencers
 - Negative Stereotypes
 - Lack of willpower
 - Fear of Failure
 - Decaying culture in today's society
 - Excuse lifestyle
 - Many goals
 - Lack of self-esteem
 - The weak state of health
 - Distraction
 - The Resistance
 - What is The Internal Resistance?
 - Your “Why” Needs to Be Strong

Marketing Secrets

You Must Be Willing to Do Things You Have Never Done Before

You Must Become the Ruler of Your Own World

Take Ownership

Accept This as the Reality

Creating The Best Version of Ourselves

Superhero

Chapter 2. Staying Self-Disciplined

The Inevitable Reality of Failure

Give Yourself Time to Feel

Create a Plan Within Your Plan

Remember Why You Started

Resolve to Staying on Track

Get Back to the Basics

Keep Yourself Accountable

Chapter 3. Mental Toughness

How Mental Toughness Can Help You To Achieve Your Long Term Goals

Benefits Of Mental Toughness In Business

The Benefits Of Mental Toughness In Times Of Hardship

How George Washington Exemplifies Mental Toughness

Chapter 4. NLP and Manipulation

Chapter 5. Overthinking

What Causes Overthinking?

Chapter 6. Procrastination

The psychological phenomenon of procrastination

Why we procrastinate: Causes of procrastination

Tossing self-compassion to the wind

Learning procrastination from role models

Thinking that you will not be effective in the task

Bias over certain tasks

Estimation of time is a little off

Focusing less on future gains and more on present gains

Being too much of a perfectionist

Anxiety and depression

Having discomfort intolerance

The Procrastination-Action Line

Chapter 7. Stoicism

Stoicism and happiness

Stoicism & Happiness

How A Stoic Leads His Life

Chapter 8. Dealing with Negative Emotions

Chapter 9. Productivity Avalanche

Law of Inertia

Motivation snowball

Chapter 10 . Getting Organized

Chapter 11 . Increase Productivity

Personal Values

The Purpose and Meaning of Your Life

The Most Important Things in Your Life

Believe That You Are Special

Perform Self-Analysis

Some Apps for Productivity

Focus Booster

Rescue Time

To Do Calendar Planners

Remember the Milk

Time Doctor

Google Calendar

Focus @ Will

If This Then That (IFTT)

How to Manage Your Work Environment

Get Rid of Physical Clutter

De-cluttering Your Mind

Staying Motivated

Reward a Good Job Done

Take a Quick Break

Watch Out for Time Killers

Checking Emails

Watching TV

Friendly Chatting

Surfing the Net

Social Media Networks

Chapter 41 . Conclusion

Chapter 42 . Introduction

Chapter 43 . Procrastination and Laziness

Laziness vs. Procrastination

Chapter 44 . Why do We Procrastinate

Fear of Failure

Fear of Success

Perfectionism

A Feeling of Overwhelm

Laziness

Chapter 45 . Overthinking

Factors That Influence Overthinking

What Is Overthinking Disorder?

Effects of Overthinking

What Science Says Happens When You Overthink?

Chapter 46 . Mental Toughness

Chapter 47 . Self-Discipline

Chapter 48 . Boost Productivity

Smooth Transitions in Between Tasks*

Look Ahead

Conquer the Day by Conquering the Moment

Rise Like a Champion

Chapter 49 . Reach Your Goals

Essential Principles in Setting Goals

Chapter 50 . What is Time Management and Why Is It Important

What is time management?

The difference between urgent and important

How to become an effective time manager

Secrets of a productive morning ritual

How to actually make time for yourself if you're a really busy person

Chapter 51 . Recommended Strategies to Deal with Stress

Chapter 52 . Motivation

“What do you want?”

The Awesome Force of Time

Motivation as a Weapon

Chapter 53 . The 80/20 Rule of Time Management

Chapter 54 . Conclusion

Introduction

Chapter 55 . Nlp

Neuro-Linguistic Programming

The Keys to NLP

Chapter 56 . Body Language

What Is Body Language?

Chapter 57 . Subliminal Persuasion

Chapter 58 . Dark Psychology

What is Dark Psychology?

Importance of Dark Psychology

The 4 Dark Psychology Traits

Chapter 59 . Mind Control Techniques

Chapter 60 . Manipulation Techniques

Chapter 61 . The Subtle Art Of Deception

The Attacks May Involve the Following Life Cycle

Social Engineering Techniques

Social Engineering Prevention

Chapter 62 . How To Influence People

Business Negotiations

Closing Sales

Getting Prices That Are Better

Leading the Desired Lifestyle That You Want

Getting Out of Things

Chapter 63 . How To Identify And Counter A Manipulation

Identify it

Build a reputation to avoid them

Know how you feel around them

Run for your life

Develop the right attitude

Engage in physical activity

Share your experiences

Chapter 64 . Tips & Tricks

Change of environment

Make it about the other person

Speak quickly

Dress nicely

Scare tactics

Consistency is key

Silence is golden

Play nice

Carry your cross

Talk that talk

Put the data aside

Be unique but also predictable in a relatable way

Newbies are easy targets

I need your help...

It's all in the name

Conclusion

Chapter 1. Introduction

If you are struggling with negative thoughts, depression, fear, or anxiety, you can take an active role in getting better. Retraining your brain with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy isn't just fluff; there is substantial evidence to support that it works. If you are skeptical, you may be surprised that this book alters your ideas about "positive thinking." You will be able to regain control of your life.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) works from a scientific base. This book will not overwhelm you with lots of empirical data, but it will display pieces of evidence that demonstrate that CBT works scientifically, and it is far more than just a theory of positive thinking.

In the United States alone, more than 40 million people suffer daily from one or more forms of anxiety disorder. Major depressions, phobias, social anxiety—these are just a few examples, but there is a wide variety and many afflictions fall under this category.

One such affliction is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Soldiers returning home from war find themselves unable to adjust to the relative calmness of a largely civilian environment. While our most common association with PTSD is soldiers, it is a myth that soldiers are the only people group affected by it. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is suffered by a wide spectrum of people worldwide. Businessmen and women, teachers, taxi drivers...no one is immune.

Effects of PTSD can include panic attacks where one is severely frightened to leave home due to external stimuli ramping up the heartbeat and inducing fear where logically one realizes it should not be present. Worse, the panic attacks might just be one symptom of many. Another familiar anxiety disorder is Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), popularized by television's detective character "Adrian Monk," whose obsessive attention to detail allows him to see what is wrong with a crime scene (but also forces him to other less desirable habits, like being unable to walk on cracks in the sidewalk or not drinking water for days because he cannot find his particular brand).

These are just a few examples of anxiety disorders, but the real

shame is that many people would rather suffer alone than address these issues.

The refusal to seek out help may possibly be because of television's representation of current psychology and psychiatry. In order to better understand CBT, we should clear the air between the two approaches. It is fairly simple.

A psychologist helps you to talk out your concerns, with the assumption that understanding a problem can give you the necessary awareness to combat it. They cannot write prescriptions.

A psychiatrist, however, takes the approach that a large portion of such afflictions are based on brain chemicals and their imbalance, and they can write prescriptions as needed.

Thus, our fear. We may be considered weak for seeking the advice of someone else to help us cope, or we may be numbed and dulled by medication.

While some consider the former school of thought, psychology, to be the superior method, each has its merit and flaws, but we need to understand that Hollywood has done a number on us in the self-help department.

Television depicts padded rooms or Victorian-era face boxes intended to keep the mad folks from biting off another person's face. Sadly, these depictions do more or less reflect the early history of psychology, but keep in mind that during early wars, amputations were performed with a saw and a healthy dose of whiskey.

Sciences evolve, and fortunately for those suffering from an anxiety disorder, this is the information age.

You can get the help that you need, and if you don't want to involve anyone else in your treatment, there is a way that you can get yourself back on track. The days of suffering in silence can be gone if you are willing to give some tried, true, and tested techniques a chance. The techniques have come bundled together under the name that you've heard but perhaps not really explored.

Let's amend this. Let's discuss Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and what it can do for you.

Chapter 2. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive behavioral therapy came about as a combination of the behavior therapy techniques developed by Donald Meichenbaum and the cognitive therapy techniques developed by Albert Ellis. It is a therapeutic approach used to treat a wide variety of emotional dysfunctions or unbeneficial behaviors. The major characteristic that distinguishes cognitive behavioral therapy from other therapeutic approaches is that it is much more systematic and goal oriented.

So, while psychoanalysis is more open ended and used to probe into a person's mind; cognitive behavioral therapy uses specific, practical techniques to change the unwanted thought process or behavior. One advantage of being so systematic is that you do not necessarily need a therapist to successfully use the techniques of cognitive behavioral therapy.

A therapist can, of course, be helpful as a guide or source of motivation when things get tough but, in general, you can successfully treat yourself with the techniques described by cognitive behavioral therapy. In fact, even if you do have a therapist, a large part of the work will be done by you since you have to apply the strategies to your everyday life. This contrasts with psychoanalysis, for example, where the therapist does the bulk of the work because it is their job to do the interpretation and analysis.

The reason that cognitive behavioral therapy is so effective in the treatment of so many disorders is because it is so problem oriented. This approach operates on the understanding that negative or harmful thought processes are the primary factor contributing to negative or harmful behaviors and emotions. Therefore, cognitive behavioral therapy targets those thoughts processes. There are two general strategies used to deal with these negative or harmful thought processes.

The first strategy is changing the thought process itself. This involves various techniques (depending on the specific problem at issue) for identifying, isolating, and eliminating a negative thought. Usually, in this process, you also work to cultivate positive thoughts

that are meant to take the place of the original negative ones.

The second strategy involves changing your relationship to the negative thought process (rather than changing the thought process itself). This requires you to constantly challenge these negative patterns of thinking or beliefs and thinking consciously about them. That means understanding what sort of errors in thinking (or cognitive distortions, as they are called in cognitive behavioral therapy) are involved. For example, perhaps you are running a slight fever and your first thought is that you have some form of untreatable cancer.

By understanding exactly how a negative thought is flawed (beyond the simple fact that it is negative), you can take the power from it and no longer allow it to control your behavior or your emotional state. This will also help you to tell the difference between rational negative thoughts (such as genuine signs of serious illness) and the irrational ones.

Both of these general strategies are highly effective ways of treating serious problems. In this book, you will learn self-treatment methods that combine both so that you can not only strip a negative thought of its power but replace it with more positive ones.

Within these two general strategies, there are a variety of specific methods used which includes exposure therapy, cognitive processing therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), dialectical behavioral therapy, and relaxation training. All of these have their own specific methodology but each has the same ultimate goal of greater self-awareness.

We can break the cognitive behavioral therapy process down into six generalized phases:

Mental health assessment: this is an important preliminary step in which you simply work to identify exactly what your problem is. Are you depressed? Are you anxious? Are you suffering from a phobia or addiction? Assessing your current mental and emotional state will already bring you one step closer to achieving full self-awareness.

Reconceptualization: this phase is more based on the “cognitive” side of cognitive behavioral therapy. It is in this phase that you begin identifying and challenging the negative thought processes which are causing the problem (or problems) you identified in the

first phase.

The specific techniques for doing this depend on your specific problem.

Skills acquisition: in this phase, you begin the process of learning the new coping skills you will use to both overcome the current problem and get through troubling situations in the future without falling back into the same negative behaviors you are used to. These coping skills can be either cognitive or behavioral skills and will depend largely upon the specific problem you are dealing with.

Skills consolidation and application training: in this phase, you put together a plan using the specific coping skills you have learned and want to use in your cognitive behavioral therapy treatment. Then, you start practicing the skills according to the plan you have created. This is typically the most intensive and time-consuming phase because you are essentially retraining your brain and trying to develop new habits.

Generalization and maintenance: by this phase, you will be more or less used to the new coping skills you have been working on throughout phases 3 and 4. Now, all you need to do is make them a part of your daily routine and use them in all challenges that you face rather than just those relating to the specific problem you were treating.

Post treatment assessment and follow up: if you have been working with a therapist, this is something that you will do with them. Otherwise, you can essentially do another mental health assessment to see what progress you have made and what areas you may still be struggling with. This may seem like an unnecessary step but it is actually very important. By doing a post treatment assessment, you can take the time to appreciate how far you have come. You can also see what problems you might still be struggling with and go through these 6 phases again to treat those.

All in all, the duration of these six phases and the whole cognitive behavioral therapy process in general will depend on the severity of the problem. However, in most cases you will begin to see positive signs of change in your thought process and behavior in as little as 6 weeks. And after about 6 months, you will notice much more dramatic results. Typically, if you work at it consistently, by the end of the 6 months, the positive skills you have been working on will

have become more or less habits (meaning you will be around phase 5 or 6 of the process).

Because the ultimate goal of cognitive behavioral therapy is to achieve greater self-awareness, you will actually continue to use these techniques long after your problem has been treated. This is because cognitive behavioral therapy is not so much a one-time treatment as it is a method for changing the way you think about and deal with the challenges and obstacles in your life. It provides you with positive coping skills (and a technique for making those coping skills into habits) so that you are not only treating the problem currently at hand, but also giving yourself the strength and skills you need to prevent any problems from happening in the future.

History of CBT

The father of experimental psychology is Wilhelm Wundt and thanks to him, we have the first lab for psychological research at the University of Leipzig. Also, the psychotherapy, as its known today saw its appearance in Vienna as a result of Sigmund Freud's work. Actually, when Freud Arrived in America in the year 1911, the psychoanalysis completely disrupted the whole psychiatry field and the point was reached when more than 90% of psychiatrists in America started to practice how to perform psychoanalysis properly. However, skepticism towards psychoanalysis and its ability to provide a solution has already been in motion since the 1950s and during these times, alternative psychotherapeutic methods started appearing and among these was CBT.

CBT was developed with contributions from people that used to use psychoanalysis as therapy and these people weren't happy with psychoanalysis and therefore they wanted to contribute to the development of something better and that is how CBT spread so quickly through Europe and became one of the prevalent therapies for solving problems of patients throughout the world.

The proper model of CBT appeared in the 1970s and even though it took some time for CBT to appear, it started to evolve really quickly and much quicker than the models such as behaviorism that was pioneered by John B. Watson in 1920s. One reason for this is the fact that CBT isn't strictly limited to the domain of psychology and it was a lot more flexible and it consisted of other fields of science

as well, which made it possible for new variants of analyses to emerge.

The first appearance of CBT was by itself a large shift from the therapy models that were established and mainstream at the times, but there were still a lot of advancements afterward which ensured that no aspects of cognition were forgotten about. The second generation of CBT is where CBT got its current name as cognitive behavioral therapy since that time presented a combination of cognitive and behavioral techniques.

There were three generations of CBT throughout history. The first generation of CBT can be seen as taking a stance against traditional therapies at the time which were based on the principles of psychoanalysis and humanism. The first attempts of CBT were already focused on the actions and behaviors that weren't useful and techniques that were based on science were used in order to combat those behaviors. An example of this would be someone who is afraid of public speaking which actually means that that person is afraid of being criticized and judged. What was attempted to be accomplished by CBT at the time was to actually gradually expose individuals to uncomfortable contexts so that anxiety and discomfort would be eventually reduced and mitigated.

As the 1970s were nearing the end, it became more and more clear that CBT was a real deal and that it was here to stay and more and more journals and researches started to cover CBT which led to CBT being introduced into behavioral approaches. It also helped that CBT had, at a time, a lot of supporters in the Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy.

At that time, it was also proposed that what should be the focus of research was how humans learn and what actually has an influence on learning since this is what would have a real impact on the second generation of CBT. The basis of this research was the belief that how humans are conditioned is affected by an individual's cognitive and verbal capabilities instead of it all being automatic. It was considered that learning was influenced by elements such as attention, awareness, expectations and linguistic skills. It was considered that people needed more sophisticated models about conditioning instead of those that could be used for animals which was the case for the earlier 20th century. One of the issues was the fact that some things, such as people's capabilities for words and

language, weren't taken into consideration even though those abilities are pretty unique. Therefore, it was necessary to focus more on the cognitive side of things.

As a result, the 1960s saw the emergence of cognitivism which certainly shook up the field of experimental psychology and changed how things were done and viewed. The cognitive capabilities were now at the forefront of the psychological research and they weren't simply seen as a byproduct anymore. That is how the second generation of CBT came to existence in 1977 and the principles that emerged were a lot more flexible and internal attributes such as thinking and emotions were taken into consideration when trying to figure out how people act. It was, therefore, concluded that people can think and adapt their actions for different contexts.

By the beginning of the 1990s, there already existed a lot of knowledge and understanding about how thinking can be distorted for some people and what can be done and which techniques could be used in order to rewire automatic thought patterns. If someone is anxious about something, the exposure should be gradually introduced and increased so that anxiety for certain circumstances would be reduced. Automatic thought patterns should also be questioned.

In conclusion, the fusion between two generations of CBT was what enabled the idea of CBT as we know it today to appear and to be accepted as a form of therapy that is focused on expectations, perspectives, systems of beliefs, cognition and not just behavior on the outside.

How to Change Your Core Beliefs with CBT

Our core beliefs are at the center of the person that we are, i.e., our beliefs about ourselves, others, and life as a whole. Our core beliefs determine how happy we feel about ourselves, our capacity to get along with others, and our potential to achieve the dreams that we hold for our future.

Considering the power that our core beliefs wield, it is critical for every person to have core beliefs that serve to improve their lives, instead of destroying them. Sadly, many people struggle with negative core beliefs, and they ultimately lower the quality of their

lives. For instance, if an individual has a core belief along the lines of “I’m foolish”, they will shun opportunities that would have led them to great heights and be trapped in a life of mediocrity.

Our core beliefs are the absolute truths and fundamental convictions we have formed about ourselves throughout our lives. To change how you feel, think, and act, you first have to alter your core beliefs. The origins of our core beliefs are varied, but for the most part, they originate from our early childhood. If our dads used to beat on us and call us foolish, we might have internalized the belief that we are stupid. Getting rid of our core beliefs is an extreme challenge, but if we are self-motivated and patient, we can achieve it.

The following are the guidelines for altering our core beliefs:

Deal with One Core Belief at a Time

You can’t possibly get rid of all your core beliefs at once. The trick is to deal with one core belief at a time. You want to start with the most powerful core belief. This is the belief that pervades nearly all of your life. Once you identify it, you have to work out a schedule for eliminating this core belief. For instance, if the most dominant core belief of yours is, “I’m a loser”, prove yourself that you’re no loser. Make a schedule that will guide you in handling various aspects of your life. You want to be in total control.

How Does It Affect Your Life?

Understanding how a certain core belief affects your life will motivate you to change your circumstances. Banking on your introspection, find out how your core belief negatively affects both your personal life and general life. For instance, if you believe that you’re ugly, you might not be the most confident person around. Moreover, it can cause you to isolate yourself from other people. In that sense, you lack social support because your core belief holds you back from fitting in with the rest. Understanding the effect that your negative core belief has upon your life is a catalyst for ridding yourself of that negative core belief.

How Much Do You Believe Your Core Belief?

Some of the core beliefs that we hold are utterly ridiculous. Although the conscious mind would view them with suspicion, when it comes to the unconscious mind, it’s another story

altogether. The unconscious mind gives much weight to our core beliefs. You are supposed to reflect hard and find out how much you believe your core belief to be true. In this exercise, be as honest with yourself as you possibly can, and don't let your ego ruin what you are working on. On a scale of one to ten, rate the extent to which you believe a core belief to be true. Recall various events or experiences that support your level of conviction.

What Is Holding You Back from Changing the Core Belief?

There are three main reasons why we fear changing our core beliefs: fear of failure, fear of uncertainty, and fear of change. If we have kept a certain core belief throughout most of our lives, what will happen if we get rid of it? And more importantly, how will we cope if we fail? To get rid of a negative core belief, you have to be emotionally invested. Becoming conscious of what is holding you back from changing your core beliefs is a great step forward.

Find Ways to Disprove Your Core Belief

Now that you have identified your core belief, and established to what extent you believe in it, the next challenge is to look for evidence that contradicts your core belief. By disproving your core belief, you send a message to your subconscious that this core belief is inaccurate. The subconscious will take notice of the evidence and start altering this core belief. For instance, if one of your core beliefs is, "I cannot make money", go ahead and learn a skill and monetize that skill. When you get money, you're free to point out to your subconscious, "See, I can make money." Eventually, your subconscious will drop that core belief.

Find a New Core Belief

When you are certain that your core belief is fallacious, it's time to get rid of it and create a core belief that captures the truth. For instance, instead of saying, "I hate people," you might say, "I enjoy my own company." That way, negativity is eliminated. Instead of saying, "I'm a loser," you should say, "I'm quirky."

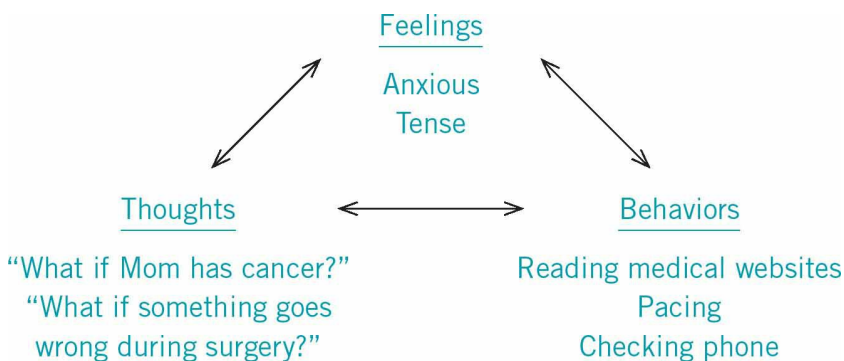
Chapter 3. Negativity and Anxiety

While too much anxiety can be debilitating, too little anxiety is not good, either. We need a certain amount of anxiety to motivate us to take care of things that matter to us.

Peter was lying in bed, debating whether to hit snooze one more time. He checked the clock—6:09 a.m. His train left in one hour. Peter imagined the consequences of having to take a later one, which would mean being late to his first meeting of the day. His boss definitely would not take that well. Peter sighed, turned off his alarm, and hauled himself out of bed.

Peter was experiencing the right amount of anxiety: enough to get him up and out of bed on time, and not so much that he felt overwhelmed or that it impaired his performance. Like Peter, we have the ability to imagine future outcomes that depend on our actions. Whether it's work, a first date, a job interview, a competitive event, or anything else, we know our actions affect what happens. This knowledge creates a heightened state of energy and motivation to give our best performance. Recall from chapter 1 that CBT looks at the connections among thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. With anxiety, the thoughts are focused on threat, the feelings include nervousness and fear, and the behaviors include efforts to prevent the feared outcomes.

Kendra's experiences with anxiety as she waited for news of her mother looked like this:



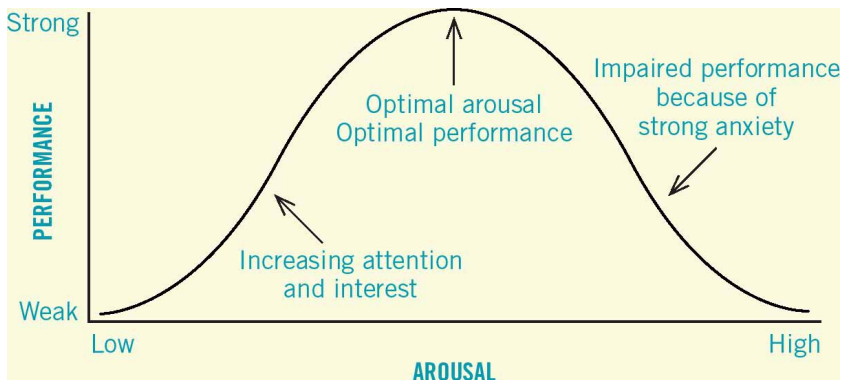
Kendra's worries about her mother's health fuel her anxiety and tension, which in turn cause her more worried thoughts. Her

feelings and behaviors similarly interact and reinforce one another, creating a tightly wound state of anxious apprehension.

While Kendra's anxiety manifested as intense worries, there are many ways that anxiety shows up in our lives.

THE OPTIMAL LEVEL OF ANXIETY

More than 100 years ago, animal experimenters Robert Yerkes and John Dodson provided a clear demonstration of the link between emotion and motivation. They tested how quickly mice learned a laboratory task. A wrong answer resulted in a shock of varying severity. Their results showed that the lowest levels of shock led to relatively slow learning, as the mice seemed insufficiently motivated by mild punishment. The highest levels of shock similarly produced slow learning, as the mice seemed to have reached a heightened state of arousal that interfered with learning.



Psychologists call this pattern an “inverted U” because of the shape it makes when graphed.

Humans show the same inverted U pattern as a function of their anxiety; too little and too much hurt our performance, and modest amounts maximize our success. For example, moderate amounts of stimulants like coffee can increase our energy and focus, while higher amounts make us feel jittery and overstimulated.

The Many Faces of Fear

Anxiety disorders are the most common psychiatric diagnoses, encompassing a wide range of conditions. In their most recent revision, the creators of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition (DSM-5) removed OCD and PTSD from the anxiety disorders, placing each one in its own category.

There were various reasons for these changes, but it remains widely understood that both of these conditions can feature a strong dose of anxiety. PTSD and OCD also respond to similar treatment approaches as the remaining anxiety disorders, and so they are included in this chapter.

SPECIFIC PHOBIA

Excessive fear of certain stimuli may indicate a specific phobia. The person may realize their fears are overblown, which doesn't make it any easier to shake them. Avoidance of the feared object or situation is very common.

Anything can become an object of fear, but certain ones are most typical. They include:

- Certain situations (e.g., riding in an elevator, flying in an airplane)
- Natural environments (e.g., thunderstorms, heights)
- Animals (e.g., spiders, snakes)
- Blood-injection-injury (e.g., giving blood, getting a shot)

SOCIAL ANXIETY DISORDER

It's normal to feel a moderate amount of anxiety in social situations, especially when we're performing or being evaluated. Social anxiety may be a disorder when it's so strong that it causes tremendous distress or leads a person to avoid situations that would trigger it. Typical feared situations include:

- Giving a speech or presentation
- Talking in a group of people
- Eating in front of others
- Going to a party
- Being the center of attention
- Disagreeing with someone
- Meeting new people

In each of these situations, the person is afraid of doing something embarrassing or otherwise having others think badly of them. Part of what can make social anxiety persist is that it's hard to disconfirm the fears. How do we know, for example, that people didn't hate our wedding speech, even if they do the socially expected thing and tell us it was great? The uncertainty inherent in social situations can perpetuate our fears.

PANIC DISORDER

A panic attack is a discrete spell of intense anxiety, usually

accompanied by physical symptoms like sweating, pounding heart, and shortness of breath. Panic often involves alterations in our sense of reality, such as feeling like things aren't real (derealization) or feeling detached from our experience (depersonalization).

Most people will have at least one panic attack in their lives. Panic is part of a disorder when it leads to fear that something terrible is happening (e.g., "I'm having a stroke") or when a person has intense dread of the next attack.

Panic attacks are so aversive that people with panic disorder often begin to avoid any situation where they're liable to panic, especially if it would be difficult to escape. Common situations people avoid include bridges, movie theaters (especially sitting in the middle of a row), and trains. This type of avoidance may warrant an additional diagnosis of agoraphobia.

"Part of being human is managing the balance between anticipating the future and accepting its uncertainty. Worry is a sign that the balance has been disrupted." —Susan M. Orsillo and Elizabeth Roemer, *The Mindful Way Through Anxiety*

GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER (GAD)

While panic disorder represents the sense of immediate danger, GAD involves a more diffuse anxiety about future events. The core of GAD is continual worry about a wide range of things (as "generalized" suggests). Someone I know likened GAD to the stress of final exam week but applied to every situation in one's life. The excessive and uncontrollable worry in GAD leads to symptoms like difficulty concentrating, trouble sleeping, muscle tension, and restlessness.

POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

Anxiety is an understandable response when we've been through a terrible traumatic event. Anything that poses a threat to our physical well-being can lead to PTSD, including natural disasters, car accidents, muggings, sexual assaults, and combat, among others. Witnessing something awful happen to someone else or learning about a trauma that someone close to us experienced can also set us up for PTSD.

After experiencing a terrible trauma, most people will have symptoms like:

1Reimagining and reexperiencing. This includes intrusive memories, nightmares, and strong emotional reactions when reminded of the event.

2Avoidance. This includes trying not to think about the trauma, as well as avoiding people, places, and things that remind the person of what happened.

3Changes in thinking and mood. For example, we may start to see the world as a very dangerous place and ourselves as powerless to cope with it. We might also struggle to trust others, and paradoxically begin to engage in risky behaviors. We're also less likely to experience positive emotions and more likely to experience negative ones.

4Hyperarousal. This means our nervous systems are on high alert. We may have trouble sleeping and concentrating, and may constantly be checking our surroundings for danger.

These reactions are very typical for nearly everyone after a trauma. To meet PTSD criteria, they have to meet the somewhat arbitrary criterion of lasting more than one month.

OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER (OCD)

Our brains are wired to detect the possibility of danger and try to avoid it. A glitch in this essential function can lead to OCD. The obsessions in OCD are repetitive thoughts about something bad that might happen, like getting sick, offending God, causing a fire, or harming another person. Naturally a person wants to avoid these feared outcomes, which leads to the irresistible urge to neutralize the obsessive fear through compulsions.

Examples of the obsession–compulsion cycle include:

Fear of getting sick → Wash hands

Fear of having hit a pedestrian → Check the rearview mirror

Fear of having committed blasphemy → Say a ritualized prayer

The compulsions are powerfully reinforcing through the negative reinforcement discussed in chapter 7 (see here). At the same time, people with OCD usually still feel uneasy after doing the compulsion, because there is no way to know for sure that what they fear won't happen. As a result, a person with OCD is likely to repeat the compulsion and can spend hours a day stuck in the

obsession–compulsion cycle.

While many conditions will improve with various kinds of psychotherapy, OCD requires a specific treatment. The best-tested therapy is called exposure and response prevention, which is a type of CBT. As the name indicates, it involves exposing oneself to the OCD-related fears and giving up the compulsions that maintain the disorder. Check the Resources section of this book if you're looking for effective OCD treatment.

OTHER MANIFESTATIONS

Even if you don't meet criteria for any of these DSM-5 anxiety conditions, fear can still play an unhelpful role in your life. For example, the subtle and consistent ways in which we make decisions based on fear can have profound effects on the course of our lives. What's more, these manifestations of fear can be so pervasive we don't even recognize them. These are the fears that keep us stuck not in a debilitating disorder but in a life half-lived.

You can see these kinds of fears at work in:

- Holding ourselves back out of fear of success
- Avoiding taking reasonable risks out of fear of failure
- Living the way we think others expect us to and not how we want to live
- Avoiding the vulnerability that comes with true intimacy
- Experiencing anger that arises from fear (e.g., being mad at a loved one for being late because we worried for their safety)

Take some time to consider how fear shows up in your own life. While fear is designed to keep us safe, it can keep us from living freely and fully if we let it guide our actions.

Let's turn now to the tools that can help relieve anxiety.

ANXIETY AND YOUR BRAIN

Imagine you're enjoying a nice walk through the woods when you encounter a slithery thing on the ground. Light that's reflected off the object will enter your eyes and fall on your retinas, leading to signals that travel through the brain's relay station (the thalamus) and into the primary visual areas located at the back of your brain. The information is then relayed to other parts of the brain, including memory areas that match the object with the concept

“snake.”

The fact that you’re seeing a snake is then passed along to other areas, including the amygdala, tucked deep inside your brain, which is central to feeling and expressing fear and other emotions. How does your brain know to fear a snake next to your foot on the ground but not the one behind the glass at the zoo? The amygdala also gets input from the hippocampus, which is crucial for understanding context. Thanks to your hippocampus you may even start to feel afraid the next time you walk through the woods, even if you don’t run into a snake.

Signals from the amygdala then activate a brain area called the hypothalamus, which will activate the fight-or-flight response of the sympathetic nervous system through the release of stress hormones like epinephrine (adrenaline). The hypothalamus also triggers the pituitary gland to release hormones into your bloodstream that travel to your adrenal glands (which sit on top of your kidneys), causing them to release additional stress hormones like cortisol. Our existence on this planet has depended on this coordinated response, allowing us to recognize and respond to threats, like moving away from the snake.

Just as it’s important for our survival to learn to fear certain stimuli, it is also adaptive to learn when danger is minimal so we’re not overly fearful. This new learning depends on providing our brains with new information, which anxiety-driven avoidance can prevent. For example, if I always avoid dogs because a big dog knocked me down when I was a little kid, I’ll never learn that my early encounter won’t be my typical experience with dogs. When we practice mindfulness and cognitive behavioral techniques for dealing with fear and anxiety, we are retraining these brain areas to change their response to things that scare us.

Strategies for Working Through Worry, Fear, and Anxiety

There are many tools for managing overwhelming worry, fear, and anxiety, including cognitive, behavioral, and mindfulness techniques.

THINK (COGNITIVE)

When our fear is activated, we're likely to have thoughts that terrify us even more. For example, if we're gripped by fear on a plane, we might become convinced the plane is going to crash, which further heightens our fear and continues the cycle (refer to the CBT model of anxiety [here](#)). By challenging our anxious thoughts, we can interrupt this feedback loop.

A note of caution: when we're overwhelmed with anxiety, it's difficult or even impossible to talk ourselves down with reason alone. These techniques will tend to be most effective before anxiety has taken over and in combination with behavioral and mindfulness techniques.

Remember that anxiety is not dangerous. We often come to fear anxiety itself, believing it's dangerous to be too anxious. However, as uncomfortable as it can be, anxiety itself is not harmful. Furthermore, fear about being anxious only leads to more anxiety. Keep in mind even in a severe bout of anxiety that the physical, mental, and emotional symptoms will not hurt you.

Reassess the likelihood of danger. Our fear will convince us that what we're afraid of is really going to happen. But keep in mind that anxiety disorders by definition involve unrealistic fears given the actual risk, so the probability that they will come true is actually quite low. If your fear is telling you something really bad is likely to happen, you can use the Core Belief form from chapter 5 (see [here](#)) to test this belief. How strong is the evidence supporting it? Is there any evidence against it? Has it happened before, and if so, with what frequency? If you discover any errors in your thinking, reevaluate the likelihood that what you fear will actually happen in light of the evidence.

Reassess the severity of threat. Sometimes the thinking error we make isn't about how likely a negative outcome is but how bad it would be. For example, Joe thought it would be terrible if people knew he was anxious while giving a talk. As he examined this thought, he realized that people might indeed know he was anxious from the quaver in his voice or his shaking hands, but realized it probably wouldn't be a big deal. After all, he'd heard speakers who seemed nervous before, and their anxiety hadn't colored his overall

perception of the person or the quality of his or her speech.

Why worry? Worrying is a hard habit to break, especially because we often believe we should worry. We might tell ourselves that worrying:

- Helps us think of solutions to a problem
- Prevents us from being blindsided by bad news
- Shows we care
- Can make things turn out well
- Helps motivate us

These beliefs generally are false. For example, we can't avoid potential pain by imagining the worst-case scenario, which would be just as upsetting if it actually happened—plus we feel needless distress from countless worries that never materialize. When we see the futility of worry, we're more likely to redirect our thoughts.

Test your predictions. This technique sits at the intersection of cognitive and behavioral approaches. When you've identified a fear about how a specific situation will turn out, you can design a way to see if your forecast was right.

Lily dealt with a lot of social anxiety at work. She was convinced that if she spoke up in a meeting, her colleagues would ignore her ideas and probably even criticize them. She wrote down these and other expected outcomes before a meeting, and then she took a risk and volunteered her thoughts. While people seemed a bit surprised when she spoke up, nobody criticized her ideas. In fact, her supervisor asked her to lead a subgroup that would develop her proposal. After the meeting, Lily wrote down the actual outcome versus her prediction.

As we saw in chapter 5, our core beliefs can distort our memories, thereby reinforcing our beliefs. It's important to record when our predictions turn out to be false, to help us encode and remember information that's counter to our expectations. Testing our predictions is closely tied to exposure, which we'll explore later in this chapter.

Chapter 4. Assumptions and Core Beliefs

Core beliefs are the rules that we live our lives by. You most certainly established core beliefs during early childhood. They are the basis on which you've built the assumptions and beliefs around all aspects of your life. Friendship, love, career, your inner sense of self-worth, ambitions, and expectations, all of which are rooted in the basic beliefs about life, the world you live in.

As you grow up, your core beliefs shape the way in which you process information and create unconscious assumptions. They are the rules of thumb you rely on to interpret the events around you.

Core beliefs have a direct relationship with feelings and behaviors. You direct emotional responses and actions according to your perception of what the reality of a situation is, and what you can expect to be the most likely outcome of said situation. This is the reason why you will react differently in a situation, depending on whether you interpret the core belief as positive or negative.

Core beliefs develop over time and are always learned. You'll learn core beliefs from your nearest family members, teachers, books you read, etc. While some core beliefs are conscious (spiritual), many of them aren't. Unconscious core beliefs guide your thought process in a hidden way.

When core beliefs are inaccurate and are causing you to have a more negative relationship with life and your own thoughts, they are called dysfunctional core beliefs. This is the reason why personal core beliefs play a role in depression. They are often negative views of yourself and the world that can lead to hopelessness.

Depending on your experiences, you may start to believe that you aren't worth any value and that you are not going to find love or the job you love, which may cause you to start to feel hopeless. Cognitive behavioral therapy addresses these functional core beliefs through talk therapy. Your counselor will listen to your experiences, work together with you to discover the dysfunctional core beliefs, and show you how to rely on your strength and capabilities to cope with these problems.

Identifying and working towards changing the negative core beliefs will help you change your views on the world and events surrounding you. You will be able to think more rationally, rather than through the lens of negative beliefs. You can experience the same situation completely different depending on your core beliefs. This impacts how you feel and act in a situation. If your desire is to live a life of choice and positive orientation, you are going to have to look into your negative or dysfunctional core beliefs and decide that you want to abandon them.

It is common for people who suffer from depression to believe in positive things regarding other people, but not regarding themselves. While this points to a negative self-image, it also shows that you do carry particular positive core beliefs that you can use to battle the negative. There are many cognitive behavioral therapy techniques for you to change your beliefs. To begin working on your core beliefs, you must start by learning how to identify them.

Identifying Dysfunctional Assumptions

The term 'cognitive schema' is an umbrella term used to describe core irrational beliefs and underlying assumptions, dysfunctional beliefs, and many others. While all of these are closely related terms, there are many distinctions that can be made between them.

Core beliefs and assumptions

Negative core beliefs are a dysfunctional frame you use to screen, categorize, and interpret experience. They lead to further negative assumptions. Core beliefs act beyond your awareness. As you are acting based on your core beliefs and are unable to verbalize them, it is possible that you spend a significant portion of your entire life being led by irrational core beliefs.

Underlying assumptions

The underlying assumptions are dysfunctional but conditional beliefs that shape your response to outside experiences and situations.

Example:

One of the frequent negative assumptions in people who are suffering from anxiety and depression is thinking that whenever you bond with someone and they get to know you, they will realize that you are in some way bad or inadequate and they'll reject you because of that. Much like with core beliefs, you might be unaware of these underlying assumptions and hence unable to identify and cope with them.

Automatic thoughts

Automatic thoughts are brief streams of thoughts about oneself and others. While you may not always be aware of your thoughts, they are most certainly creating strong emotions that are guiding your actions.

Maladaptive automatic thoughts

Maladaptive automatic thoughts are a distorted reflection of a situation which you often accept as true. They are the real-time manifestations of dysfunctional beliefs about life, the outer world, yourself, and your future and are often triggered by a stressful situation.

Identifying Core Beliefs

Dysfunctional core beliefs induce thoughts and rules you create for yourself to live by. Such an example is the belief that you are unlovable, which drives the conditional rule that being agreeable and saying 'yes' means that you will be loved by others. This can lead to obsessive thinking about your looks and exercise habits, which can result in distorted eating habits. Core beliefs form in childhood but strengthen over time as a result of experiences and perceptions.

If you are more prone to storing negative information and disregarding positive aspects of yourself and your life, these core beliefs can become very pervasive.

Irrational beliefs

Irrational beliefs become harmful when paired with other dysfunctional beliefs. One of the generalized irrational beliefs is

that you have to be nice to people in order for them to like you.

Challenging These Beliefs

Changing the core beliefs begins with identifying automatic thoughts. For you to master challenging and identifying thoughts you need to be able to understand the concepts and techniques used for this.

The central focus of cognitive behavioral therapy is for you to build up your skill to alleviate symptoms and prevent relapse. Your counselor will work with you to help you develop skills to be able to generalize thoughts and beliefs about different situations. In the initial stages of the treatment, it's important to identify and modify the deep-seated core beliefs.

Now that you know enough about the negative core beliefs behind your symptoms, how will you choose to challenge them?

Some of the ways for you to address negative core beliefs are to use the technique of examining the evidence to inspect the truthfulness and accuracy and to identify cognitive traps.

- What would you say to a friend? Rational thinking and gathering the evidence before making conclusions.
- Mindful acceptance and therapy can help when the core beliefs are too strong to cope with using cognitive behavioral techniques. The goal is to learn how to simply observe the thoughts without emotionally engaging with them.

Using Spiritual Beliefs to Change Dysfunctional Beliefs

You can turn to mindfulness and spiritual practices to address and change dysfunctional beliefs. Your spiritual/religious tradition can become a framework to challenge and change your unconscious negative outlook on life. This section will explore some of the ways that you can use spiritual practices to regain control over your mind.

Practicing religious traditions might have a soothing and calming effect on your mind and body. In a modern world, many have abandoned spiritual rituals due to the lack of their reasoning or real-life significance. Your religious practices don't have to have a

logical meaning in regards to depression. If they have a calming effect on your thoughts and feelings, practice them to the degree to which you feel is beneficial.

Memorize scripture

Many verses in the religious scripture have an empowering, encouraging, and calming effect. You can look for those within the frame of your spiritual orientation, choosing the ones that make you feel safe, comfortable, loved, understood, and supported. You can memorize these verses/phrases/mantras and turn to them during challenging moments.

Prayer

Prayer has a profound, calming effect on the mind and body. If praying helps you feel better, you can establish a routine during which you pray and reflect on your thoughts and experiences.

Mind Recovery

Most religions offer and share the point that thoughts affect emotions and guide behavior. Either by yourself or alongside a counselor, you can look for content within the scripture that guides you toward more rational and adaptive thinking framed in positive principles. This will help you replace negative, inaccurate thoughts with grounded, rational ideas that reason with you emotionally. The particular link that your religion has with your emotions is what makes this technique important. Just listening or talking about the positives may not 'speak to you' in emotional terms. But, coming from a source you trust and love, the encouraging words will sound more convincing.

Targeted Prayer

Prayer revolving around different topics (problems, spiritual troubles) is a part of most religions. The key to regaining mental balance with prayer is to choose passages that speak directly about your fears and challenges. Reciting these words will provide a wise look at your situation, and the emotional experience of prayer will relieve the symptoms enough for you to contemplate the verses with calmness. Here's how to practice contemplative prayer:

- Choose an appropriate passage.
- Sit in a comfortable position that allows you to breathe evenly.
- Read the words carefully and slowly. Think about the meaning of each individual sentence or phrase, savoring and relaxing in the experience.
- Read the passage repeatedly, reflecting on the manner in which it touches your life. Are there any experiences, even as small as sounds, sensations, or smells, that you associate with the passage?

How to challenge dysfunctional thoughts with prayer

You can use a practical CBT approach called 'ABCDE' to challenge negative beliefs about spirituality. This approach will help you understand the relationship between your behaviors, thoughts, and feelings through the lens of your spiritual beliefs. Here's how to apply the ABCDE technique:

- Describe the situation using the thought record technique mentioned in
- List beliefs. Which beliefs can you identify in this situation?
- Describe feelings and behaviors. Look into the way the beliefs make or have made you feel and the behaviors they cause or have caused. List all of the feelings and behaviors and rate them on a scale from 1 to 10. The scale will represent the intensity of the feeling, with 1 being the least and 10 being the most intense.
- Dispute beliefs. Is there any proof that the beliefs are inaccurate/accurate? Once you encounter an error in your thinking, write it down. Write down the alternatives, or possible resolutions of the situation based on your strengths (talents, abilities, resources, support).

The religious perspective

How will you challenge these views based on religious beliefs? Look

at the situation through the lens of spiritual wisdom and use other sources that will guide you in interpreting the beliefs in a religious manner, discovering more accurate positive beliefs.

Form an effective view on the core beliefs

Do you have a different outlook on the situation? Have your feelings changed after you looked at the situation from a different angle?

Contemplate positive religious practices

Most religions encourage altruism, forgiveness, gratitude, and generosity. These core values can help guide your behaviors and relieve symptoms of depression and anxiety. Practices like prayer for others, activities within your religious community, and activities that promote hope and tolerance are effective ways to relieve stress. They also provide regular social contact and help overcome isolation. Here are some of the things you can do to engage with your religious community in order to enforce positive core beliefs and values, and challenge the negative ones:

Talk to a spiritual guide. Most religions offer resources and counseling for battling depression and anxiety, which they view as a spiritual matter. Private conversations with a spiritual guide will help you examine the defeating thoughts and help you start thinking in a more positive light.

Sign up for a religious class. Many religious communities offer classes revolving around different topics. You can choose from any that match your interests, and you can also attend those that specifically target spiritual problems, if not depression directly.

Read religious literature. Reading religious books under the guidance of your counselor and spiritual mentor can help you learn more about the spiritual views on your problems.

Prosocial values

Religious views of mankind are geared towards preserving life, human contact, tradition, and tolerance. With the goal of preserving humanity and preventing distractions, religions advocate for values such as honesty, love, integrity, but also kindness, forgiveness, as well as giving and receiving with gratitude. Modern life can often send a contradicting subconscious message, conditioning your value with beauty, money, or productiveness. Delving into the religious outlook on humanity will remind you of unconditional and infinite human value.

A positive outlook on life

Religious views on life are mainly positive and encouraging, motivating you to view obstacles as temporary and non-

threatening.

Simple wisdom

Many religious teachings are in accordance with modern psychology, but it is the manner in which they're presented and interpreted that is sometimes misconstrued. Religious teachings are a vast source of simple-worded wisdoms that use symbolism, metaphors, and allegories to explain complex philosophical ideas. With the right guidance, you will learn how to identify and understand these sources of wisdom in a healing manner.

Emotional component

Your emotional relationship with spiritual practice is what makes it so effective. In order for any exercises or techniques to help establish positive beliefs, it is necessary for you to be open to truly believe and accept a brighter perspective. The emotion of love, affection, trust, and comfort you associate with spirituality is one of the strongest tools to help you open your mind (and heart) to change.

Chapter 5. How to Develop Daily Self-Discipline

When you are looking to improve your self-discipline, the first undertaking is learning about cognition and human thought processes. You will also want to know the technical definitions of self-discipline and various related elements. This will ensure that you have a comprehensive understanding of the topic, its foundations, and its working parts. From here, you can build on your knowledge and use it to reinforce and develop your discipline so that you are able to be a more productive person.

Self-Discipline

Self-discipline is complex, but in short, it is the ability to overcome your impulses and control your feelings and actions. It is also the ability to go after what you believe to be right, even when there are temptations present to try and get you to abandon it. This type of discipline includes:

- Being able to tackle all responsibilities that must be done
- Being able to control your desires and feelings
- Being able to control your conduct and train your reactions

There is a strong correlation that exists between life satisfaction and a high level of self-discipline. Overall, people tend to be happier when they have more self-discipline. A study published in February 2011 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America concluded that kids with a strong sense of self-discipline grew up to become adults with higher levels of wealth and health.

Once you develop a higher level of self-discipline, it simply becomes easier and more natural to be productive and find satisfaction. You will find yourself getting things done without feeling like you have to force yourself to do it. You will be able to easily ignore distractions and temptations that can throw you off track and make it impossible to pursue your goals. For example, say you have a big deadline on a project for work. If you lack self-discipline, you will likely find yourself checking your social media,

talking to friends and taking unnecessary breaks instead of working through each stage of the project. Then, when the clock starts to wind down, you go into panic mode and have to rush to get it in on time, possibly poorly completed and un-polished. On the other hand, if you have strong self-discipline, you complete the project with enough time to double-check that your work is done properly, and all of those otherwise 'distractions' can be enjoyed in their own time instead of making you feel guilty. You can mentally lock-in a deadline, and it becomes your focus until you complete it.

Now, no one is born with an instant, strong sense of self-discipline. Remember this fact, because it lets you know that with the right training, you can develop it yourself. In addition to self-discipline not being an innate quality of most humans, there are other reasons people might feel undisciplined, including:

Under-developed inner strength

Temptation

Fear of failure

Negative thinking

Negative environment

Lack of life purpose or goals

Stress

Procrastination

Poor self-esteem

The good news is that all of these roadblocks to self-discipline can be overcome with the right methods. If you feel that you lack self-discipline right now, you do not have to remain this way; you can change it. It will take some effort, but as soon as you commit to putting in the work, you will be amazed at how quickly positive changes start to happen.

When you have strong self-discipline, you will find it highly beneficial. It works to ensure that:

You easily make better and healthier decisions

You can strike the proper balance to ensure efficient time management

You are more satisfied with your life

You are naturally more responsible and reliable

You can more easily avoid negativity

Your life becomes more stable in all areas

Your life becomes more balanced

The drawbacks in life are easier to avoid

You can more easily reach a higher level of success

How DO you improve your self-discipline? There are five components to consider:

Improvement. You have to want to improve something specific in your life. You have heard the saying that to change a problem, you have to first recognize it. The same is true when you lack self-discipline.

Long-term thinking. You have to plan for the long-term. Where do you see yourself in a year, 10 years and 25 years? Consider what you want to achieve in different frames of time.

Short-term thinking. What do you want to achieve this month? Remember that your short-term successes and accomplishments will play into your long-term ones.

Balancing short and long. You have to strike a balance and essentially mediate between what you want right now and what you want to achieve in the future.

Obstacles. These are inevitable, and you will face both obvious and unexpected obstacles as you work on your self-discipline. Prepare and plan for them so that they do not throw you off track, and try to be flexible. You will also want to learn from each obstacle you face.

Cognition

What is cognition? In general, cognition is an inventory of information that you have acquired as a result of your personal life experiences and other knowledge you have gained throughout your life. Cognition is defined as your ability to process different types of information via knowledge, perception and other subjective methods that make it possible for you to integrate all of this information to both interpret and evaluate the world.

There are multiple processes involved in cognition, such as

learning, memory, reasoning, attention, language and decision making. Cognition is studied in an array of fields, from neurology to psychology. Philosophers have debated the relationship between external reality and the knowing mind for centuries. Overall, there is room for interpretation when it comes to this topic.

When it comes to contemporary cognitive theory, there are two broad approaches. The first is referred to as the information-processing approach. This approach tries to understand human reasoning and thought processes by comparing the brain to a type of computer system with the ability to process, use, acquire and store information in various ways.

The second approach revolves around accommodation and assimilation. Jean Piaget's work is the basis for this approach. Accommodation is the change a person makes to adjust to an experience. Assimilation is the use of a person's previous experience to interpret reality.

There are numerous processes to explore to better understand cognition. These can happen unconsciously or consciously, artificially or naturally. In most cases, however, each completed process of cognition happens without people realizing it, since it occurs very quickly. For example, when you are driving and the light turns red, you may seem to automatically make the decision to stop. However, there are numerous levels of cognition that have told you which decision to make in that moment.

The cognitive processes include:

Perception, to aid you in understanding and organizing the world via the different stimuli that you receive from your senses.

Memory, to aid you in storing, coding and recovering information that you have learned in the past.

Attention, to aid you in being able to focus on an activity or stimulate you so that you can retrieve it later to process more thoroughly.

Language, to aid you in using spoken word to express your feelings and thoughts.

Thought, to aid you in taking all of the information that you receive and putting it to use.

Learning, to aid you in getting new information to build on the

knowledge that you already have.

Because you were paying attention, you perceived the light turning red, which activated your memory of learning traffic laws long ago (using your language skills to do so). All of this comes together for you to think, “I need to stop my car for the red light,” and to carry out that thought almost simultaneously.

Theories of Human Thinking

What is thinking, and which theories help people to understand how humans acquire and utilize their thoughts? There are hundreds of theories, but a few seem to be more prominent than others. Knowing what these are makes it a bit easier to visualize what goes on inside the human mind.

In August of 2012, the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London published a paper concerning the evolution of human cognition. The researchers looked at both cultural and incremental evolution. The cultural evolution research looked at how culture impacts how people think. This essentially means that people from different cultures might think differently about various topics based on their religion, family structure, traditions, and so on. If you explore different cultures throughout the world, you can see evidence of culture affecting logic and art. The incremental evolution research focused on thinking and cognition based on biology. For example, how a person’s genetics might impact their learning.

It is likely that both play a role in developing how each person processes thought. However, what is still being debated is which one truly dominates cognition. For example, will a person’s cultural norms be a stronger element in their adult thinking, or will their genetics be the more reliable determinant?

In March of 2016, a paper published in the Journal of Social Ontology explored if the ability of humans to have objective thoughts occurred in natural history. Researchers thought that some thinking is presupposed. This is a theory that goes back decades. The author of the paper essentially wanted to try and challenge the two-step theory of human thinking evolution that was initially proposed by Tomasello in 2014. It looked at essential tension and how sociality is largely agreed upon to be the basis of thinking.

At the end of the day, the research all seems to agree on one thing: we do not fully understand human thinking. Both of the above papers explored alternatives to what has been historically deemed to be true. The scientists who have studied in this field feel that so far, what is known about human thinking is largely hypothetical. Studies are ongoing, as are the creation of new theories, but for now, much of the elements of human thinking are just educated guesses. There are techniques that can improve different areas of our thought processes regardless of why they work, and for now, this is what people should use if they wish to alter their current way of thinking.

How Thinking and Self-Discipline Play Into Each Other

You have surely had someone tell you that your thoughts are powerful, and there is truth to that statement for example, if you think about something sad that happened in your life, it is natural to experience some sadness in the moment of remembering. The same is true with happy experiences. Thinking of them brings a smile to your face.

When it comes to self-discipline, thinking of being more disciplined can help to encourage it. Now, just thinking about self-discipline will not automatically make you a more productive person. Remember that the previous section discussed how culture and genetics can impact your thinking, so you would have to work to overcome any challenges these present. However, if you start out thinking more positively and spend more time thinking about your reasonable goals, this may help to put you into a better mindset to work on your self-discipline.

Ultimately, your thoughts will not automatically make you more disciplined, but they will put you into a more open mindset that makes it easier to take advantage of the techniques that can improve your level of discipline.

Exploring Habits and Their Impact on Self-Control

Habits play a major role in who you are and your level of productivity. To effectively improve your self-discipline, you will need a strong understanding of habit-making and the ones that are in play in your life. This chapter will provide you with comprehensive information about habits so that you are able to

make the positive changes you need.

What Are Habits?

By definition, a habit is a regular or settled practice or tendency. They are anything we find routine, and you likely carry out many habits without even really noticing it. For example, for most people, it is a habit to get out of bed in the morning, use the restroom and grab a quick beverage. This becomes automatic, and every time you wake up, you naturally do those actions in that order without even really thinking about it.

Habits can be good or bad. For example, smoking is a good example of a bad habit. Bad habits tend to have a stronghold on you, and they can be difficult to break. This is because there are numerous additional behaviors associated with them, and each behavior needs to change in order to break the bad habit. Procrastination and overspending are two other common habits that have no positive impact on your life but are difficult to break.

Habits that are advantageous can be a boon for your life. For example, the habit of brushing your teeth two to three times a day not only helps to promote greater oral hygiene, it has a statistically positive effect on your overall health.

Why are habits so important to your level of self-discipline? You have dozens of habits that you unconsciously perform each day, but maybe you don't feel disciplined yet. Your level of productivity and discipline are directly tied into the habits you choose to keep up. If you have several bad habits, these are likely taking your productivity away from you. For example, if you are a smoker, think about how many times per day you take a short break to smoke. It likely adds up to an hour or more of not doing anything productive. If you were to eliminate just this one bad habit from your life, you could take this time, this 'extra hour,' and use it to work on achieving your goals. If you regularly lose track of time and are chronically late, you lose the trust of other people over time; how much more effective at achieving goals could you be if people in your life help you out because they knew you, too, are reliable? Instead, a bad habit robs you of both time and trust.

Now, when your good habits outweigh the bad ones, this allows you to intentionally manage your mind. Ingrained habits free up your mind to focus on a higher level of what is important to you.

When people tend to have more good habits, they can think clearer in general, and tasks that once seemed complex are naturally easier to think about and to tackle.

Your habits have influence over all elements of your life. It is easier to develop what we call “bad habits” because these often lead to a sense of immediate pleasure. For example, a person might smoke a cigarette or buy expensive things because this calms them in that moment. However, over time, these bursts of pleasure can cause major problems in your life. Smoking can have negative health consequences, and buying those expensive things can heavily impact your personal finances. This also plays into gratification, which you will learn more about this in a later chapter.

Habit Development

In December 2012, a paper published in the British Journal of General Practice looked at habits and the psychology behind them. One study discussed in this paper analyzed habit formation and what it takes to make a behavior automatic. The participants chose a behavior that was healthy, such as taking a walk or eating a piece of fruit. They also chose a cue, such as doing the activity directly after breakfast. After approximately 66 days, the frequency of their chosen behavior started to slow. They missed the occasional routine, but overall, this did not slow the ultimate acceleration of the habit. After missing it once, the automaticity of the habit could still be resumed.

This study shows that when you are working to build good habits, it will not be easy to forget about them once the foundation is set. The key is putting in the work to develop the habit to a state of automaticity.

In August of 2014, the Society for Personality and Social Psychology studied people’s daily lives and how habits play a role in our day-to-day activities. They estimate that approximately 40 percent of the activities that you do each day are the same and in the same situations. They attribute this to associative learning. The research shows that once you find a behavior that makes it easier to accomplish your goals, you seek to repeat these patterns. Associations start to form between response and cues as a result.

The process of habit formation starts within the brain’s basal ganglia. This is said to trigger a three-step process, which is the

habit loop you will learn more about next. Over time, as the habit-loop continues to be performed, the brain essentially gets involved less and less, making the process of performing the habit one that becomes automatic once the associated cue occurs.

Chapter 6. How to Master Your Emotions

Anger manifests in many different ways and forms. Not everyone reacts the same way when they get angry. Some people yell, some people throw things, some people quietly seethe. It is different for everyone. This chapter will discuss each manifestation of anger to help you understand which of them matches yours. Once you understand your anger style, you can learn how to change your unhealthy behaviors and respond differently in the future.

A large number of people go around feeling at least a little angry all the time these days, and some have more justified reasons for this than others. Let's look at the differences between unjustified and justified anger.

Justified Anger

People who are justified in their anger are those who are hungry, who are taking on unmanageable tax burdens, who cannot afford housing or health care. Those who have lost loved ones to war or who don't feel as though they have a choice in political situations all have justified anger. Other situations where anger is justified might be homelessness, or inability to find employment or means for education, as well.

Unjustified Anger

Anger that stems from misplaced frustration or blame would be unjustified and unreasonable. The people who have unjustified anger include people who don't take responsibility for their own actions, who blame others for things beyond anyone's control, or who feel as though they are always being victimized by life circumstances. These are the people who always put their own needs first, and don't think about others.

Does Anger Give You the Illusion of Control?

If engaging in anger makes you feel as though you're actually in control, you will have a hard time ever controlling your anger. This heading sums up a lot of people's central problem with anger. For those who are interested in studying this emotion, it can be hard to find clinical literature on it. But this is starting to change. With drive-by shootings, road rage, and high school killing sprees on the

rise, people are starting to pay closer attention to those who are acting out, their extreme anger, and acts of aggression.

Suddenly, paying attention to warning signs of anger seems a lot more important. Within the last 15 years, at least 50 books have emerged on the subject of anger. In the year 1995, a professional book called *Anger Disorders: Definition, Diagnosis, and Treatment* came out that proposed some diagnostic categories to help professionals handle anger as its own syndrome, instead of connecting anger to various other disorders.

The following will help you make sense of the anger-related, self-defeating actions that arise from this emotion.

The Forgotten Defense

Anger can be thought of as the forgotten defense of Freud. If, in Freud's opinion, every defense mechanism of the human mind is there to protect our personalities from the effects of the ego being attacked, it seems unusual that he didn't consider anger as part of this process.

Anger as Camouflage

When it comes to an essential human feeling that is mainly there to protect someone from another feeling, anger might be the exception. Anger almost never exists as the main, primary emotion. Even when it appears to be a knee-jerk, instantaneous response to being provoked, there is usually another feeling that was there first. This primary feeling is what your anger is popping up to control or attempt to camouflage.

The Road Rage Example

A simple example of this idea of anger would be the extremely frustrating experience of someone cutting you off in traffic. Nearly everyone that experiences this event reacts with anger. However, when you look deeper at what getting cut off in traffic usually involves- the danger of getting into a life-threatening accident - you notice that at the moment before taking action to avoid the crash, you felt some kind of fear or apprehension.

Switching from this level of apprehension or fear to the intense state of anger occurs so quickly that most people can't recall the flash of fear they had felt before the anger or rage took over their mind. Rage itself appears to be a more desperate, stronger type of

anger that was created in the mind to get rid of the threat to one's personal safety or ego, whether this is physical, emotional, or mental.

Secondary Anger and What It Means

The inner process happening in the above example also applies to other emotions that, once they appear, can be hidden through a flash of secondary anger. And as many psychological defenses get in the way of healthy coping mechanisms (by hiding the initial anxiety that must be faced), anger also shows how fragile the ego is that needs to be supported and shielded.

How Anger Controls Us

If anger leads us to a feeling of power and appears to be a magical solution to mask our deep fears and doubts, it's no wonder that it controls us in so many ways. In a way, anger is similar to cocaine, causing strong addictions due to its illusory effect of empowering us. Though almost no one realizes that their tendency toward getting angry is a way to cope with, intimidate, and disarm their enemy; anger is used as a way to make up for lack of self-esteem and personal power.

Unlike feeling out of control or weak, the emotion of aggression or anger can cause a sensation of invincibility or invulnerability. In fact, anger can even have physical effects on someone, making them momentarily stronger with adrenaline.

Anger for Distancing in Relationships

Anger also has a function in regulating the distance between us and others in close relationships, ensuring safety from getting hurt. If someone's parents or caretakers were untrustworthy, unreliable, or unresponsive, that person would probably grow up to be wary or defensive. They would likely cultivate a way to be emotionally detached in their relationships. Although these people might wish to form a strong bond that they've missed from childhood, they wouldn't know how to express these desires and needs in an open, healthy way. Risking this with someone who may react in a negative way could hurt them gravely.

The Fear of Letting down your Guard

The deep fear in these people is that letting their defense down and allowing themselves to be vulnerable, revealing their deep desire,

could lead to rejection. A negative response could be very harmful to them, so they use anger as a protective measure and distance themselves as a way to survive emotionally.

Many spouses say that as soon as they notice their marriage going very well, their partner would pick a fight, probably due to feeling threatened by this closeness. Wounded psychologically from parental disregard, insensitivity, or even worse, they might have a serious distrust of getting too close to someone, defaulting instead to defensive anger as a way to protect themselves.

Using Anger to Push Someone Away

On the other hand, anger can also push others away from us, leading them to be the one to back away from the relationship first. If someone wants to get plenty of space and alone time, all he or she has to do is be angry all the time. This will cause others to avoid you at all costs. If you have no experience with relational intimacy, the feeling of being close to someone else can feel dangerous to your inner equilibrium, which sets off internal alarms, causing anger. In this sense, the anger can be said to be justified, but still not healthy to act upon.

Too much Detachment

But feeling very detached from others may also dredge up old fears and wounds, so sometimes, the one who wanted distance might pursue the other. What we can learn from this is that even unconscious anger can be used in many ways that regulate the feeling of vulnerability when it comes to close relationships. This can not only be utilized to create distance with the other person when closeness causes anxiety, but it can also be used as a way to try to engage the other person from a distance.

If a person had an insecure or tenuous attachment to his parents growing up, it's logical that the least risky way to get attached to someone else would be using anger to create distance. Scared of being too close to someone else, but scared of completely breaking our attachment to them, getting angry easily presents a solution, even though it's unsatisfying and dysfunctional. You can ask yourself the following questions to have a better understanding of your anger:

- What skills should I learn for controlling my anger?

- What is my anger supposedly protecting me against?
- How can I address the core feeling behind my anger?

Anger can be compared to an emotion that is just the tip of the iceberg. It's rarely there on its own, and instead exists to hide other, deeper emotions happening below it.

Explosive anger

This form of anger is exactly as it sounds, explosive. People who experience explosive anger often let their anger bubble under the surface for a long time, until the anger simply overloads their system and they explode as a result. This type of anger can be especially scary for the people around you when you release your anger all at once. People who do not know you well may think that your explosions of anger are sudden, unexpected, and extreme, but the people closest to you will likely recognize that the explosion is simply the result of a lot of buried anger. In fact, you are probably not even very angry about whatever it is that made you explode, you are probably holding on to anger about something that happened days or weeks earlier.

Have you ever found yourself screaming about something that is actually quite petty? Do you say things like, "If you leave your dirty towel on the bathroom floor one more time, I'm leaving you!" Are you actually mad about the towel? Probably not, as frustrating as that towel might seem. You are probably angry because you feel like your spouse or child does not help around the house as often as they should, or you are angry because you feel you have been disrespected by their lack of cleanliness. You are not actually furious about the single act of a towel being left on the floor.

So, what do you do to avoid explosions of anger?

Studies show that angry outbursts actually only last two or three seconds. Instead of letting your words escape from your mouth, count to ten. By the time you have counted to ten, odds are that you are calm enough to rethink what you were about to say. Simply rephrasing your angry statement can completely change the outcome of the conflict.

Instead of saying, "If you leave your dirty towel on the bathroom floor one more time, I'm leaving you," try something a bit more

gentle, like, “It would mean a lot to me if you could be more aware of the mess you make.”

Self-Abuse

This kind of anger involves blaming yourself for whatever has caused the conflict. Using the same example as before, consider how you would react if your spouse left their towel on the floor. Would you blame yourself? Would you decide that the reason they left it on the floor was because of you?

Your anger is your fault, but the stimulating event that caused your anger is not your fault. Why do you think it is your fault? It is important to really consider this question and discover why you feel that way. You may need to work on your own self-esteem, and your feelings of self-worth. The actions of someone else are never your fault.

Avoidance

With this form of anger, you will likely to translate your anger into other habits to pretend you are not angry or pretend that everything is okay and you have nothing to be angry about. This behavior usually manifests with self-destructive behavior like overeating, excessive spending, drug or alcohol use, and sleeping a lot.

People who express anger in this way likely came from households where other family members expressed anger in violent or volatile ways, so they learn to bury and hide their own anger, rather than dealing with their anger properly.

Avoiding the problem is never wise: you will eventually reach the point where the situation is totally and completely unmanageable, and you have absolutely no control over your reaction or the reactions of those around you. The situation may even reach a point where the consequences are irreparable.

If your avoidance tactic is to overeat, and you do not make an effort to control the situation or your reaction to it, you will eventually find yourself in an incredibly unhealthy place, both physically and emotionally. Constantly avoiding the problems in your life by overeating will only lead to obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and other serious, life-threatening health issues.

You have to learn to recognize when you are avoiding your anger

and find a way to express your anger before it becomes excessive. Doing so could save your life!

Sarcasm

This form of anger can be particularly damaging to your interpersonal relationships. It may feel good in the heat of the moment to make a sharp, cutting remark about what has upset you, but that response is unfair, mean, and unhealthy.

Consider how it feels when the roles are reversed. Does it feel good when someone directs a cutting, sarcastic remark towards you? It does not. Rude remarks only serve to damage the self-esteem and self-worth of those involved, and can create distrust and negativity between two people.

No matter how angry you are, no matter why you are angry, no matter what about, it is important to always, always respond with kindness. Without kindness, relationships cannot survive, whether they are friendships, romantic relationships, or familial relationships.

Passive Aggressive

This form of anger is much like the act of ‘avoidance’ you previously read about. Instead of expressing your anger in a healthy way, you might choose to act in a vindictive manner by deliberately finding ways to make the lives of others more difficult, especially if the person in question was involved in whatever has upset you.

If you are angry about something at work, you may find yourself reacting in petty ways, such as using the last of the copy paper in the office printer. Instead of refilling the machine with paper before you leave, you walk away and let the next person deal with it, hoping it causes them irritation. No matter what you are upset about, reacting in this manner is immature, inappropriate, and petty.

Another example: Your boss asks you to stay late for a staff meeting and does not care that you have already had plans that evening. Instead of handling the issue maturely, you decide to show up to the meeting late. It might make you feel better in the moment, but your actions likely mean that the meeting runs even longer than anticipated, and that affects every single person at the meeting, including you. Your anger has then affected a lot of people that you

had no reason to be angry with.

Habitual Irritation

This kind of anger usually manifests in a lot of tiny moments that seem innocuous but are actually having a very negative effect on your interpersonal relationships. Habitual irritation refers to being 'bothered by' tiny tasks that do not really matter.

Do you have a coworker who always wants to borrow your stapler? Do you find that irritating? Consider the moment. Are you actually upset because he or she wants to borrow your stapler, or are you upset about something a bit bigger? Perhaps it is because your coworker is disorganized or unprepared, and you feel they should have learned better by now? Odds are, the stapler is not what is really bothering you.

If this is the kind of anger that you have, it is important for you to really think about what is actually upsetting you and how your frustrated outbursts might be affecting your relationships. If you snap at someone every time, they ask to use your stapler, they will eventually stop asking if they can use it and might tell other colleagues that you are unhelpful. Not because they understand why you are upset, but because they are afraid of your reaction, and afraid of being the target of your outburst.

Now that you understand the different ways anger can present itself, have you discovered what type of anger you typically experience and act upon? Understanding your particular brand of anger will help you identify that anger before you experience it, and this will help you learn how to control your anger and handle your reactions in a healthier manner.

As previously discussed, anger is a perfectly natural response to what you may unconsciously perceive as a threat. The first step in managing your anger is managing your response to anger. You can do this by identifying what makes you angry, as well as identifying the first emotional and physical signs of your anger. Learn how to step away from situations that are likely to anger you, and learn how to calm yourself down when those situations simply cannot be avoided.

Teach yourself not to dwell. Constantly revisiting whatever made you mad will only make you angrier. It is an entirely unproductive and ineffective use of your time and energy. Focus instead on the

positive qualities of the person who angered you, or the positive qualities of the situation you were faced with. There is always a silver lining - you just have to look for it.

Much of anger management is simply changing the way you think. This is far easier said than done, but it can be done! You can do this in the following ways:

- Remove “always” and “never” from your vocabulary. Using these words is an attempt to justify your anger, and they will only alienate the people you are directing them towards.

- Be logical. Justifiable anger can still become irrational or disproportionate anger. Try to remind yourself that the world is not centered on YOU. Try to maintain a balanced perspective.

- Rephrase your expectations as desires. Do not demand things of others, under any circumstance. This can come across as aggressive and negative. Instead of saying, “You have to do it this way,” simply say, “I would prefer that you do it this way.” By changing the way you phrase it, you remove the negative connotation connected to your statement. This will make other more likely to cooperate with you.

Another strategy for coping with your anger is to relax. Deep breathing exercises, visualizing relaxing imagery, listening to classical music or nature sounds, using aromatherapy like lavender or eucalyptus - these tools can help to minimize your angry emotions and allow you to better cope with whatever is happening to you. As silly as it may sound, counting to ten can be very beneficial, and is always an accessible tool.

You should also work on your communication skills. Angry situations typically lead to miscommunications and difficulty understanding one another. Anger causes people to jump to conclusions, to make assumptions, and to react without listening or thinking. If you need to step away from the situation and take a few moments to calm down, do so. Nothing can be resolved if the parties involved cannot speak to one another calmly and respectfully.

You should also practice regular physical exercise. This will help you decompress, burn off the stressful energy you feel, and relieve any underlying tension. Exercise is one of the most flexible tools for managing your anger: depending on the type of exercise you

choose, it can give you the chance to be alone if you need it, or to socialize with others in a group activity if that is what you need instead.

But most importantly, you should learn to recognize and avoid your triggers. If you know that traffic makes you angry, change the route you take to work, or start taking the bus. If you get angry when you see how messy your child's room is, simply shut the door so that you no longer have to see the mess. Do not seek out what may make you angry.

Deep Breathing

Deep breathing exercises are highly recommended. These exercises allow you to take a series of slow, steady, and deep breaths for up to ten minutes. Breathe in for four long counts, and then breathe out for four long counts. Use your diaphragm muscle to control your breath: imagine that the breath is coming from your gut, as opposed to your chest. Deep, even breathing should help slow down your heart rate and reduce your blood pressure.

Relaxing Imagery

You have probably heard of "going to your happy place." If you could go on vacation anywhere in the world, where would you go? Once you have answered that question, hold onto your answer. Next time you get angry, imagine yourself on that vacation. Take a few moments to daydream about it. You may be surprised how much this can help.

Meditation & Yoga

Any non-strenuous physical activity, like yoga or meditation, can help you relax and find a renewed sense of peace. Consider joining a yoga class, and practicing once or twice a week. There are many meditation programs available for free, so sample what's out there and try one that sounds like you would find it relaxing. Start small, with a five- to ten-minute guided meditation for beginners; you will not be comfortable with a two-hour advanced meditation as your first attempt! The benefits of meditation may take a few sessions for you to notice, so don't give up.

Problem Solving

For every problem, there is a solution. This may sound like just another cliché, and it may not bring you much comfort in times of anxiety or crisis, but it is nonetheless true. Instead of focusing on your anger and letting it control the situation you are in, focus on finding a solution. Take it one step at a time, and try to do what you can (even if it is minimal) to resolve the situation. Do not punish yourself or beat yourself up for what has happened. Do not blame others or point the finger. Take a deep breath and map out a plan of action. Doing so will make you feel more in control, which will automatically reduce your anger.

Communicate

If something has made you angry, talk about it. Just be sure to talk about it in a calm and constructive way. Never allow yourself to become disrespectful or hurtful towards others. If you need to talk to someone outside of the situation first, do it. Find a friend or family member and take a moment to vent to them about whatever has made you angry. Once you've got that off your chest, consider discussing the issue with those directly involved. Again, your conversation needs to be calm, constructive, rational and respectful. Try not to get defensive or hyper-critical. Using "I" language is helpful, especially in talking about the hurt or fear you feel when certain things happen. Think before you speak, and remember to use kind language.

Laugh

They say laughter is the best medicine, and that can be true even when it comes to anger. Nothing can defuse an angry situation faster than honest laughter. If you cannot laugh at yourself, then take a moment to look for some silly or funny videos online; this may help you redirect your emotions and calm down. Whatever you do, though, do not allow your anger to become mean, petty or sarcastic. This could be more harmful than the anger.

Change the Environment

Remember to take a break when you need to. If something happens at work to anger you, ask your supervisor if you can take a break and then take a short walk outside of the building. Remove yourself from the situation, and you will find it easier to calm down. If something happens at home, and you cannot leave, tell everyone in the house to give you some space and then take a bath or even a

short nap. Taking a few moments for yourself will better prepare you for the conflict that awaits when you return.

Counseling

If you think you need to seek counseling, do it. There is no shame in seeking therapy from a professional for anger management. In fact, there is no shame in doing anything to better your life! Most psychologists agree that, with regular therapy, it only takes two months for someone to make significant strides in managing their anger.

Chapter 7. How To Get More Productivity

Productivity is one of the most important elements to know about when it comes to building your self-discipline. When you have a high level of productivity, you will find that you are getting more done each day and that greater self-discipline simply becomes natural to you. The key is fully understanding what productivity is and what it takes to improve it and get it to the most beneficial level possible.

What is Productivity?

Productivity is essentially a measure of efficiency. It shows how much you are able to get done and how quickly you can finish tasks without making mistakes. When you are not able to complete tasks, it forces you to get further behind. As you fall behind, you start to become overwhelmed, and this can make you want to give up on your goals.

When you are being as productive as you can be, the following benefits are often enjoyed:

You will have a greater sense of clarity since when you are productive and staying on top of things, you are making things simpler. Simplicity lends to productivity.

You will find it much easier to focus when you are productive since you will be able to work on a single thing at a time.

You can more easily eliminate things in your life that just lead to congestion, allowing you to worry more about the good and positive things that are present.

You will find that your life is more peaceful and less stressful since you will not be constantly fighting the clock to get things done.

You will find that you are more effective in all areas of your life because you will know what has to be tackled first and what is able to wait until you have some free time.

It is easier to achieve a work-life balance when you are productive since scheduling becomes far easier.

You can find more time for yourself to reflect and plan so that you

can lessen the chances of unexpected, uncontrollable emergencies happening.

Techniques to Improve Productivity

Improving your productivity will feed you with an increase in your level of self-discipline. Because of this, it is important to work on your ability to be productive while enhancing your personal discipline. The following are commonly used techniques that will work to take your productivity to the next level:

You want to start by tracking how much time it takes you to do individual tasks so that you can see where all of your time is going.

Take breaks regularly to avoid burnout.

Create deadlines for yourself, but make sure that they are reasonable or else you will fail.

Know when you can say “no” to something that would simply distract you from being productive.

If something will take under two minutes, do it right away and check it off of your to-do list.

Keep a schedule where the most important tasks or meetings are written in a bright noticeable color so that you never accidentally forget about them.

Stop trying to be perfect, because it is only a distraction that keeps you from getting things done as efficiently as possible.

Stop multitasking and focus on a single task at a time, because if you try doing several things at the same time, you are only giving each task limited focus and thus reducing your efficiency.

Use your commute to your advantage and use it to reflect, get things done or something else that is productive, but safe, depending on how you commute.

Turn off notifications on your phone and computer, since they are designed to be a distraction and give nothing positive to your overall productivity.

Do everything that you can to minimize interruptions throughout the day.

Exploring How Spies Achieve Ultimate Productivity

Spies are fascinating, and they are the topic of some of the most

popular action movies and books of all time. They are agile, and they always seem to win even when the odds are clearly not in their favor. This is largely due to their ability to be productive. Spies view their mind like a gadget. It works like a fishing pole when you are fishing, per se. It is a tool that can be used for just about anything, and there are ways to manipulate it to ensure that it can be beneficial for every situation.

When spies are thinking through a situation, they are able to do so without missing a beat. Coming to the right conclusion seems almost automatic to them. In a matter of seconds, they determine a course of action and immediately use it. First, they compile data, then they analyze everything that they have collected, then they make a decision and lastly, they take action. This seems like something that would take forever, but due to the intense training spies get, they can do all four steps in seconds.

Now, you do not have to be a spy in order to learn how to think like them. You need to start by learning how to rapidly collect data about a situation and how to immediately analyze it. You also need to ensure that your decision-making skills are sharp so that you choose to take the right action.

For example, you are in an interview for a job that you desperately want. You are asked why you want the job. You need to quickly collect data concerning the personality of the interviewer, the tone of the question and the personality of the company. Then, you will analyze this and make a decision about how you will respond. The action is your decision. As you practice this process, you will find that you can get from data collection to action in a matter of two to three seconds every time.

Building on Your Good Habits to Eliminate the Bad

Once you develop good habits, you have to make sure that they are strong enough to outweigh your bad habits so that you are not tempted to go back to the bad ones. You want to work on both improving them and expanding them. These are two different actions, and it is important to differentiate between the two since there are different steps and types of work involved in each.

Improving Your Good Habits

Once you adopt a good habit, you have to make it stick. There are several methods that you can start using now to ensure that your

newly-gained good habits are ones that are going to be a part of your life for the long-term. In order to improve your good habits:

Commit yourself to using the good habit for just 30 days to start with.

Make sure that you give your new good habit some attention on a daily basis.

Approximately 14 days into your new habit, remind yourself about your goals and check to ensure that you are on track.

Keep it simple, and only focus on improving a single good habit at a time.

Create a trigger that will remind you to give attention to your new habit.

Ensure that you are consistent in how you choose to go about improving your good habit.

Find a person that will help you to stay accountable to yourself so that if you slip up, you can immediately get back on track.

If the bad habit you replaced the good with makes you feel like you have lost something by this point, find something positive to replace it with.

Get rid of temptations that are threatening to throw you off track.

Do not be afraid to be imperfect. In fact, embrace imperfection.

Think of this process as an experiment because when it seems less permanent, you will find that it is easier to work with.

Expanding Your Good Habits

You know how to develop good habits and even how to make them stick, but do you know how to expand on them? Essentially, expanding your habits means that you are using the good habits you have solidified to serve as a foundation for building additional great habits.

For example, you have created a good habit concerning how you eat. You have reduced your intake of junk foods to just once a week as a treat and all of your primary meals are healthy. To expand on this, start including exercise to your daily activities to further your health pursuits and habits. Consider taking a 15-minute walk after

dinner or doing some basic calisthenics before breakfast. The key is to start simple and build just like you did when you improved your eating habits over time.

Another example is building on the good habit of improved time management at work. Once you master managing your time better at work, you want to expand this to improving your time management when you are at home. For example, create a schedule for cleaning and work on it until it makes the most sense and saves you time keeping a clean home.

Just make sure that you incorporate similar good habits at the same time. This will make it much easier to expand how many good habits you have.

Natural Good Habit Development and Incorporation

In working to develop and incorporate good habits naturally, there are six primary stages you want to follow. When you follow these exactly, you will find it much easier to engage in developing better habits naturally.

Start contemplating the good habits that you want to develop so that you can start getting used to the idea.

Start thinking of the exact good habit that you want to develop.

Start getting prepared to make the changes needed to naturally adopt the good habit.

Take action to make the needed changes

Work on maintaining your success.

Terminate your efforts and start the steps over on a new good habit you are looking to develop.

Eliminating Stress

This is an important element of working on your good habits since stress is the one thing that can quickly throw you off track. Stress is among the most common challenges that people face since making life changes can automatically cause stress. In fact, it is estimated that approximately 70 percent of adults in the United States experience anxiety or stress on a daily basis.

Try the following stress-reducing technique as you journey towards building good habits:

Take some time to exercise when stress gets too great, even if you do it for just a few minutes, as this helps decrease the stress hormones in your body.

Utilize certain scents that work to make you feel calmer, such as rose, bergamot, neroli, sandalwood, orange, lavender, vetiver, chamomile, frankincense, ylang ylang and geranium.

Reduce how much caffeine you are consuming, since caffeine can induce anxiety, especially when taken in large amounts.

Take a few minutes to journal what you are feeling and experiencing during a particularly stressful situation.

Know when to say “no” so that you do not get too overwhelmed with your responsibilities.

When stress is high, sit comfortably and breathe deeply for a few minutes to reduce tension and center yourself in focus with a task or responsibility.

Consider meditating when you start to feel overwhelmed with what is happening in your life.

Find a trusted person who will listen to you vent and help you find ways to solve problems that are causing you stress.

Every day take 10 minutes to decompress and reflect on your day. Put your stresses behind so that they cannot affect you tomorrow.

Chapter 8. Retraining Your Brain

CBT teaches the importance of paying attention to behaviors and increasing the frequency of positive activities through Behavioral Activation. You have learned about the key elements of experience: thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and bodily sensations. You have learned the common Thinking Traps. You have started to learn how the Thought Record is used in CBT to connect automatic thoughts and feelings to particular situations that are arising in day-to-day life, and how CBT defines a number of Thinking Traps that people commonly fall into. The fact that you have learned all this is already an accomplishment.

It is possible, however, to go a step further in your understanding of CBT. What you will now learn is how CBT teaches people actively to dispute automatic thoughts that involve Thinking Traps. But before we get into the details, it will help if you have some background on the cognitive model on which CBT is based. That way, you'll be in a better position to understand what it is a CBT client is trying to do when they are disputing their thoughts. Let's take a quick tour of the cognitive model.

The Cognitive Revolution

It wasn't too long ago that the computer was first invented. It was even more recently that computers became part of our everyday lives. Many of us can remember when the first personal computers first came on the market in the 1980s and 1990s. Since their invention, computers have changed many aspects of life and they have affected the way we think about ourselves.

One very big area of change occurred in psychology. Psychologists began to replace previous ways of understanding the mind and brain with a computer-based understanding. They started to think of the mind as functioning as a computer. Most importantly, just as computers function to process information, so can the human mind. And just as computers can malfunction in processing information, so can the human mind. To better understand this idea, imagine a user who is using a computer to perform a basic arithmetic operation, like adding $2 + 2$. The user inputs "2+2" into the computer, and it processes the input to yield an answer: "4."

Now imagine this same user who is faced with a broken, malfunctioning computer. She inputs “2 + 2” into the computer, but when it processes the input it outputs something false: “5”

Just as a computer can fail to process information properly, the human mind can also fail properly to process the information it is presented with. The development in psychology of thinking of the mind as a computer is known as the “cognitive revolution.” This psychological revolution has allowed for new approaches to treating mental distress like depression and anxiety. Cognitive-behavioral therapy emerged out of this revolutionary new approach. CBT starts from the idea that common mental health disorders can be understood as the mind failing properly to process the information it is taking in.

The Cognitive Model of Anxiety and Depression

According to the cognitive model, anxiety and mood disorders are caused when the mind makes errors in processing information in the environment, resulting in higher levels of distress than is appropriate. Anxious and depressive states are sometimes normal - they become problems when they are triggered because our automatic thoughts are falsely causing these states to arise.

But it is not useful to you to become anxious in situations in which there is no likely threat. It is the mind that, like a computer, processes information about which situations are threatening to you, and which are not. In anxiety disorders, this information-processing function of your mind malfunctions. It is exaggerating the threat level that you face. For example, if you see a leashed miniature poodle at the other end of the park, and you feel a lot of anxiety, then there is likely a problem with the way that your mind is processing information.

In cases of anxiety disorders, the mind is operating like a smoke detector that is giving “false alarms.”

Although it can seem odd to think of it this way, the ability to depressive responses can also sometimes be useful to us. Evolutionary psychologists have suggested that certain depressive responses can be normal reactions if we have invested our energy in a person or project, and then face a loss. A period of low mood and detachment may actually help us to help the person to withdraw our investment in what we have lost so that they may go on to re-

invest in new things and move on with our lives. You may be familiar with this idea if you have ever been through the “grieving process” that often happens after a major transition or loss.

But experiencing a depressive state is only useful to you if it is happening as part of a constructive process such as working through a loss. It is not useful to you if you are becoming very depressed and there is no such process unfolding. According to the cognitive model, in depressive disorders, the mind is malfunctioning in the way it is processing information, making situations seem far more negative than they actually are. The minds of people who are depressed are known to produce a stream of negative thoughts that do not provide a full and balanced picture of the situations they are in. These include negative thoughts about themselves, others, the world, and the future. For example, if someone who is depressed fails an exam, their thoughts may interpret the situation through an extremely negative lens as being one of hopelessness. By contrast, the thoughts of someone who is not depressed would provide a more balanced view of the situation.

Questioning Automatic Thoughts

Just as a malfunctioning computer can be reprogrammed, so can a human mind that is malfunctioning to create excessive anxiety or depression. To reprogram the mind, a person will need to deliberately attend to the way it is automatically interpreting situations in his or her life. That way, they can start a process of learning that results in forming new habits of thought - habits that are not as biased towards negative or catastrophic interpretations. There are two key ways to start to correct the automatic thoughts that distort the situation:

- By asking questions that dispute or challenge distorted automatic thoughts
- By carrying out “behavioral experiments” in which the person deliberately enters situations that will provide direct evidence against distorted automatic thoughts

According to CBT, there are some key questions that people can ask about their automatic thoughts in order to reprogram negative or catastrophic biases in their thinking.

- What is the evidence in favor of, and against, my

interpretation of the situation?

- What is another way to view the situation?
- Have I overlooked any important information about the situation?
- Is the way I'm thinking helpful to me?
- How might someone else (who is not already depressed or anxious) view the situation?

In a CBT program, the therapist asks the client questions like these to help them to challenge their automatic thoughts. This type of questioning is known as “Socratic” questioning, after the Ancient Greek philosopher Socrates. Socrates would ask people challenging questions in the course of philosophical discussions that would lead them fundamentally to rethink some of their basic beliefs. When someone is continuing with CBT on their own after they have finished working with a therapist, they are encouraged to continue to ask themselves challenging questions such as these. In this way, one goal of a CBT program is to eventually help people to become their own therapists.

Let's illustrate this process by considering how Sam begins to ask herself questions that challenge some of the automatic thoughts connected with her anxiety and depression.

Recall that, last week, when Sam woke up one morning and checked her email, she discovered an email from her manager. Right away, she started to panic and feel bad. Her automatic thought was “I must be in trouble.” When she later found the courage to read the email, it turned out that her manager was asking about her return-to-work plan. Sam identified her Thinking Trap as Fortune Telling since she was anticipating a bad event (getting in trouble) but did not have direct evidence that this was going to happen.

We have already seen how Sam completed the first four columns of her Thought Record. Now we can focus on the last two columns. In these columns, she will dispute the automatic thought, “I must be in trouble,” in order to arrive at a more balanced thought.

5. Disputation - Evidence for and against

For: My manager has been critical in the past

Against: She has Not criticized me in all of our interactions, and I know that I have not done anything wrong

6. New balanced, realistic thought

“Although there is a chance that my manager will be upset with me, there is also a reason for her to be upset with me now”

Notice the question Sam asks herself in disputing her automatic thought about being in trouble. She asks the first question listed above: What is the evidence in favor of and against my interpretation of the situation? Many people find it helpful to start with this question.

But the choice of which question or questions to ask is a matter of preference. Sam might have chosen instead to focus on the question “How might someone else (who is not already depressed or anxious) view the situation?” In that case, she might have brought to mind a friend or family member who is doing well emotionally, and who would have brushed off the email from the manager without taking seriously the possibility that they were in trouble.

To further illustrate the disputation of thoughts, let’s consider a second example.

Sam was planning to go to the gym to work out after lunch, since she has found that this has been helping her to feel better. But while she was eating lunch, she was thinking about work and had the thought, “I will never be any good at my job.” This thought made her feel depressed, and caused her to lose the motivation to go to the gym. That day, she realized that this thought had derailed her plans to take care of herself. She completed an entry in her Thought Record.

This is what Sam’s entry in her Thought Record looks like:

1. Activating Event

Wednesday PM: Eating lunch, started to think about work

2. Belief / Thought

“I will never be any good at my job”

3. Consequences - Emotions, behaviors, bodily sensations

Sadness, low energy, lying down on the couch (instead of going to the gym)

4. Thinking Trap

All-or-nothing thinking

5. Disputation - Evidence for and against

For: my new manager has criticized me for mistakes I’ve made at my job

Against: I have produced a lot of good work and my other colleagues come

they have questions

6. New balanced, realistic thought

“Although I have not been perfect at my job, there are many things I do well at. Some of the things I do well at are things that other people do believe that I’m good at my job”

In this Thought Record entry, Sam decided to focus on the Thinking Trap of All-or-Nothing thinking. There might be other Thinking Traps, too (such as Fortune Telling or Mental Filter). But it is often helpful to focus on the one that stands out most prominently in the situation. In this case, Sam was struck by the way her automatic thoughts had made it seem to her that she was either all-good or all-bad at her job. In fact, the reality lies somewhere in-between.

Chapter 9. Emotional Intelligence

Harry and Pete both have a heated argument with their boss. Once Harry gets home, he starts yelling at his children for making noise and not going to bed. On the other hand, Pete doesn't yell or scream at his children even though they are making noise and not in bed yet.

While Harry chides his children rudely for making a mess with their toys, Pete gently, yet assertively, urges them to put their toys in their place and get ready to sleep. Harry doesn't know how to handle his negative emotions that are a direct result of his argument with the boss. He invariably ends up directing that anger towards his children, who aren't connected to the argument in any manner.

Pete understands that he is upset with his boss and not his children. Therefore, there is no point in screaming at his children. It will only make things worse for him.

In the above scenario, both Harry and Pete faced the same emotions, yet the manner in which they expressed a similar emotion differed drastically. Pete was able to identify and manage his emotions differently than Harry, who allowed his emotions to get the better of him.

This is the essence of emotional intelligence. Being able to recognize your own and other people's emotions and the ability to manage these emotions effectively to create a positive and pleasant outcome.

Essentially, emotional intelligence (EQ) is the knack of perceiving, managing, and evaluating emotions to create the desired positive outcome. The term was made popular by Daniel Goleman in 1995 with his ground-breaking book of the same name. However, emotional intelligence as a term was first used by Michael Beldoch in the mid-20th century.

It is the ability to monitor not just your own, but also other people's feelings, distinguish between emotions, label feelings, and leverage this emotional information to direct your thoughts and actions. This is a broader and more general definition of emotional intelligence,

though there are differences within the scientific community about what it encompasses. The unanimous view is that it is a skill that involves identifying, understanding, and managing emotions.

Emotional intelligence ability model

The emotional intelligence model was created by Mayer and Salovey, who defined emotional quotient as the ability to correctly recognize, evaluate, and generate emotions to facilitate thought, gain a better understanding of emotions, and manage emotions for enhancing both cognitive and emotional development.

The psychologist duo believed that an individual must be assessed on four distinct interconnected abilities to determine their overall EQ. The four abilities are:

- Recognizing emotions

This involves picking up verbal and non-verbal clues for understanding a person's emotions.

- Reasoning or using these emotions to facilitate thinking and intellectual activity

For example, leveraging emotions to offer solutions or reviewing situations. This helps us focus our limited attention span on the right things and react as per the situation. This benefits the overall creative process.

- Understanding emotions

Human emotions are complex. They hold multiple meanings and guide us in understanding another person's emotional state of mind. They help us understand other people's emotions and why people feel the way they do. Emotions have several nuances and aren't often as straightforward as they appear. Every emotion holds its own pattern of thoughts, actions, and intentions.

For example, if a person is hurt, you will be able to deduce why he or she feels hurt. An individual with this particular ability can immediately understand another person's emotional state and why they are thinking or behaving in a certain manner.

- Regulating emotions

This is the ability to manage your own and other people's emotions by responding suitably to them. For instance, you know how to

react appropriately when a person is angry or upset. In the example at the beginning of the chapter, we saw how Pete was able to regulate his emotions positively, even though both he and Harry experienced similar emotions. Controlling our own and other people's emotions is a major component of emotional intelligence.

Salovey-Mayer concluded that an individual may be closed to emotional signals that are too painful or uncomfortable while being open to those that aren't overwhelming. This is calculated through the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MESCEIT). It is measured by emotion-focused problem-solving.

Mixed model emotional intelligence

This model of emotional intelligence was founded on Daniel Goleman's 25 distinct emotional intelligence traits, which encompasses everything from teamwork, service orientation, and accomplishment motivation to self-awareness.

It is referred to as a mixed model since it merges emotional intelligence traits with other personality characteristics that are linked neither with emotion nor intelligence. Emotional competence is a capability that can be learned and developed to create outstanding results. This emotional intelligence model is based on five primary categories, each one with clear emotional competencies:

Self-awareness

Self-awareness is the ability to identify an emotion as we experience it. We tune in to our inner selves for assessing what exactly we are feeling and how to best regulate it. Self-awareness comprises self-confidence in your capabilities and emotional awareness in realizing what you are feeling and the subsequent emotional effects.

Self-regulation

We think we don't have great control over our emotions, but negative emotions can be managed through various self-regulating techniques like walking, prayer, running, and meditation. To self-regulate effectively, one needs to have control over their impulsive actions, must demonstrate honesty and integrity, possess creative thinking, must be able to handle change easily, and can take responsibility for their actions.

Motivation

Motivation is the ability to work towards fulfilling a set of goals. The most important aspect of this category is positive thinking. To become a positive thinker, one must always stay positive and be capable of restructuring negative thoughts. This can be accomplished by optimism, commitment, initiative, and drive for achievement. You are perpetually involved in the pursuit of improving yourself to become a better person.

Empathy

Empathy is a huge component of emotional intelligence. It is the ability to not just discern people's emotions but also to 'feel' what they feel. Empathy is about understanding others, being able to anticipate other people's needs, helping others develop their qualities, and building relationships with people who are quite different from you. Empathy is comprised of more than a single ability. However, fundamentally, it is about being able to feel and relate to other people's emotions.

Social skills

Relating to other people is another important attribute of emotional intelligence. Social skills are important in teamwork, collaboration, communication, influence, building relationships, and conflict management.

This emotional quotient model measures emotional intelligence with the 'Emotional Competence Inventory' and 'Emotional Intelligence Appraisal.'

Emotional intelligence trait model

The trait type emotional intelligence model was developed by Petrides (and his co-workers) in 2009 to assess emotional quotient. It shifts from the previous ability-based model and talks about how people possess specific emotional characteristics or traits and self-perceptions based on their unique personality.

Basically, emotional intelligence is an individual's self-perceptions about their emotional capabilities, behavior, actions, and abilities. Another label for the same concept is emotional self-efficiency. These traits aren't assessed in the real scientific way. Rather, they are analyzed by a respondent's self-analysis. The 'Trait Emotional Questionnaire' measures an individual's ability to accurately list their own traits.

Brief history of emotional intelligence

The term 'emotional intelligence' was first coined by Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer in 1990, describing it as a type of social intelligence involving the ability to regulate one's own emotions as well as other people's feelings and emotions, to differentiate among these emotions, and to utilize this information for guiding one's thoughts and actions.

Salovey and Mayer launched a research program for measuring a person's emotional intelligence and exploring its significance. For example, there was a study conducted on a group of people, where it was discovered that people who can identify and give a clear name to emotions were able to recover easily from an upsetting film they'd watched.

In another experiment, people who scored high in their ability to perceive things correctly and identify or understand other people's emotions were able to respond more effectively to changes within their social circle and build social support networks.

During the early 90s, Daniel Goleman became acquainted with Salovey and Mayer's research, which led him to author Emotional Intelligence. Goleman's school of emotional intelligence believed that it wasn't cognitive intelligence that guaranteed a person's business success, but a person's ability to manage his own and other people's emotions that determined his chances of success. He stated that emotionally intelligent people possess four primary characteristics:

People with high emotional intelligence are good at identifying their emotions or have good self-awareness.

1. They mastered the ability to manage their emotions.
2. They were able to show empathy to the emotions of other people.
3. They were efficient at handling other's emotions.
4. The seeds of emotional intelligence were sown way back in the 1930s when the concept of 'social intelligence' was put forth by Edward Thorndike. He described it as the ability to form interpersonal and social relationships with people.

In the 1940s, David Wechsler suggested that attributes of effective intelligence may be responsible for success.

During the 1950s, humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow described how people can develop emotional strength.

In 1953, people started thinking about emotions and intelligence. Dorothy Van Ghent described how novels such as Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* featured characters with high emotional intelligence.

In 1975, Howard Gardner published *The Shattered Mind*, which discussed the concept of different types of intelligence apart from cognitive intelligence.

In 1987, *Mensa Magazine* published an article in which Keith Beasley uses "emotional quotient" as a phrase for the first time. This was the first published use of the term, though Reuven Bar-on claimed to use the term in his unpublished thesis prior to the *Mensa* article.

In 1990, Peter Salovey and John Meyer's ground-breaking article on emotional intelligence is published.

In 1995, the concept of Emotional Intelligence is made popular all over the world after New York Times writer Daniel Goleman's publication of *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*. Goleman drew from Salovey and Meyer's research to talk about emotional intelligence as a vital type of intelligence for success in academics and work.

One of the most crucial aspects of emotional intelligence is that, unlike intelligence quotient, emotional intelligence is not fixed. While some people are born with an aptitude for various emotional and social components, emotional intelligence is largely malleable.

Emotional intelligence experts agree that conventional intelligence contributes to a mere 10-25 percent of our success. A major chunk of it, however, is determined by multiple factors, including our ability to manage our own and other people's emotions.

Research conducted by Harvard graduates across several professions, including medicine and law, concluded there was a zero and, at times, a negative correlation between high entrance test scores and success in various professions. This clearly establishes that a high intelligence quotient, or knowledge, alone

doesn't determine a person's chances of succeeding.

Research headed by Dr. Travis Bradberry concluded that 90 percent of top performing workers in an organization possess high emotional intelligence. People with high emotional quotient also earn \$29,000 more annually than their counterparts with low emotional intelligence within the same profession. Thus, people with high emotional intelligence are not only more productive and efficient but also, on an average, make more money than people with low emotional intelligence.

Goleman's emotional intelligence framework

Goleman's emotional intelligence framework focuses on the idea that emotional quotient, or intelligence, is an important factor in personal, professional, and social success. The framework states that emotional quotient has five fundamental domains which are then divided into four separate quadrants. A couple of these domains are linked to personal abilities, while the remaining two are linked with social competencies.

Goleman's theory is popular worldwide because it speaks of emotional intelligence as an ability that can be developed in contrast to intelligence quotient, which is largely predetermined by genetic factors.

While personal competencies are categorized into self-awareness and self-management, social competencies are divided into social awareness and relationship management. Self-awareness is the ability to identify your own emotions and their impact on yourself and others around you. Self-regulation, or management, is about managing or regulating your emotions to ensure emotions don't end up controlling you.

Social awareness includes organizational awareness, service orientation, and empathy. Relationship management includes leadership, inspiring and developing others, influence, change catalyst, building connections, teamwork, communication, and collaboration.

Self-awareness

Self-awareness is the ability to recognize one's feelings and their consequences. People with high self-awareness possess the following competencies:

- They know the emotions they are experiencing and why they are experiencing these emotions.
- They recognize how their emotions impact their performance.
- They are aware of their strengths and limitations.
- Self-aware people are open to constructive criticism or feedback, fresher perspectives, constant learning, and personal development.
- They are decisive by nature and can make clear decisions even when they're under stress and faced with uncertainties.
- People with high self-awareness are able to establish the connection between people's feelings, thoughts, and actions.
- They are able to display a sense of humor and view themselves from a lighter perspective. People who indulge in self-deprecating humor are often confident, self-assured, and emotionally intelligent people.
- People with high self-awareness do not feel the need to go with the tide. They are happy to stand alone and voice views that do not match popular views.

Self-regulation

Self-regulation is the ability to manage disturbing emotions and emotional impulses that can hinder interpersonal relationships and performance. Here are some competencies that people with high self-regulation possess:

- People with high emotional self-control can manage their impulses and disturbing emotions effectively.
- They are able to stay calm, positive, and unaffected even in the most trying circumstances.

- People with high self-regulation are able to build trust and credibility through reliability, integrity, and authenticity. They are also able to accept their own mistakes and are brave enough to call out others for their unethical acts.
- High self-regulation abilities lead these people to meet commitments, keep promises, and act on their word.
- They are also highly effective in handling change and adapting to new scenarios.

Social awareness

Social awareness is understanding other people's feelings and views and taking a keen interest in their concerns as if it is one's own concern. People who have high empathy possess the following abilities:

- They are extremely perceptive to verbal and nonverbal emotional clues while listening to people.
- They show understanding for another person's point of view even though they may not necessarily agree with it.
- They are happy to help solve people's problems and concerns in any manner within their capacity.
- People with high social awareness acknowledge other people's accomplishments and reward them for their strengths.

Social skills

Social skills are the ability to influence and persuade people. People with high social skills possess the following competencies:

- They are able to deal with conflicts in an assertive and straightforward manner.

- They practice open communication and are receptive to both praise and criticism.
- People with high social skills can inspire others to pursue a shared goal or vision.

Impact of emotional intelligence in daily life — examples

Let us say you've been offered constructive feedback by your manager about areas you can improve upon or areas where you didn't perform to your fullest potential. People with a low emotional quotient may take the criticism personally or come up with a host of excuses and blame games to cover their shortcomings. They may not accept their mistakes or they may find a scapegoat to blame their inefficacy on. They may get angry, irritable, depressed, and demotivated. Acting on emotions is easier. Identifying them and regulating them takes work.

Conversely, an individual with greater emotional intelligence will accept the fact that no one is perfect. Rather than taking the feedback personally, they'll introspect about what their manager said and work on areas of improvement to become more efficient. They will stop making similar mistakes. People with a high emotional quotient will actively seek feedback from others rather than focus on proving themselves right. They are less likely to argue and blame others for their shortcomings.

Emotionally intelligent people are open to suggestions and constructive feedback, which eventually helps them accomplish their objectives. For these folks, being right is being more efficient. They value feedback and actively work on it. This is just one of the ways high emotional intelligence can positively affect your productivity and success in the workplace.

Let us now take another example in a personal scenario.

You are involved in a heated discussion about political ideologies with your best friend. While your friend is fervently putting forth their views about their ideology, you firmly stick to your opinion. When they speak, they appear angry. An emotionally intelligent person can quickly gauge this emotion and understand the impact of the topic on their friend. You realize that you could end up hurting or upsetting them if the topic continues for a while.

A person with high emotional intelligence gets a grip on the

circumstances easily and gently acknowledges the other person's view even if they don't necessarily subscribe to those ideas. They may not agree with their friend, but they are accepting their right to disagree. Since this person is more thoughtful, empathetic, and sensitive to other people's needs, they can successfully stop a discussion from blowing into a full-fledged fight. Thus, things finish on a constructive and positive note.

Now, consider the same scenario with a person who isn't emotionally intelligent or empathetic towards other people's feelings. This kind of person is adamantly focused on their views. They refuse to understand where the other person is coming from. Thus, the discussion snowballs into a heated argument. They fan the flame of the difference even more. The results are anger, hurt, and negativity. The fight ends badly and affects their interpersonal relationship.

Chapter 10. Golden Rules of Goal Setting and Eliminating Insomnia

Do you know where you will be in five years' time? Do you have a clear objective of what to work on now? Do you know what you wish to accomplish at the end of each day?

As you have already read, goals are the stepping-stones that lead you to a successful life. Without them, you are swimming in a pool lacking in direction and focus. Setting and planning goals give you the power to control your life and the direction it takes, giving you a benchmark in deciphering if you are prosperous or not.

To accomplish goals, you need to know the proper way to set them. You cannot just tell yourself that you want something and expect it to happen. It is a process that begins with a serious consideration of what your desires are and what you wish to achieve. It requires you to work hard.

Thankfully, some steps are easily defined to help transcend the specifics of all your goals. Getting to know each of these steps is essential to your overall success in forming goals that you can accomplish and feel proud of. They are known as the "Five Golden Rules of Goal Setting." Let's dive in, shall we?

1. Create Goals that Motivate

When you set goals for your life, you need to know the importance of motivation and accomplishment. They go hand-in-hand, which means you need to choose goals that are genuinely important to you. This means that they need to hold some sort of value in achieving them. If you don't have very much interest in the outcome of your goals, they become irrelevant and you will not put as much work into them. Motivation is the vital key to accomplishing your goals.

Set goals centered on your high priorities. This gives you the focus that keeps you from creating too many goals. Achieving goals requires commitment. When you feel a sense of urgency to complete them, this maximizes your success levels. When you feel you don't have to complete a goal, you will continue to put it off until the end of time. This will leave you feeling frustrated, which

only feeds the unmotivated portions of you. It also fuels the “I am incapable of being successful” mindset.

Tip: To ensure your goals motivate you, jot down why they are valuable to you. Use this as a value statement to assist you when you begin to doubt yourself.

1. Set SMART Goals

You probably have heard of SMART goals, but do you apply them to your life? For goals to be powerful, they need to be designed via the SMART application.

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Relevant
- Time Bound

Create goals that are specific

Goals you set need to be well designed. Ones that are generalized will not help you to be successful, since they provide you with no sense of direction. Goals show you the way, so make it easy to get where you want to be by centering them on where you want to be.

Create goals you can measure

When creating specific goals, include dates, amounts, etc. to them so you can measure your amount of success. When you have a way to measure the amount of your success, you will have something to genuinely celebrate when you achieve it.

Create goals that are attainable

Ensure that it's possible to accomplish the goals you set for yourself. If you set goals with little to no hope of achieving them, you are demoralizing yourself right off the bat and eroding your confidence.

This doesn't mean to set goals that are too easy either. When you complete goals that you didn't have to put much work into, it feeds the cycle of non-achievement in the future. Set realistic, but

challenging goals. Find the balance. You want goals that require you to raise the bar a bit, for these are the ones that will give you the biggest sense of satisfaction.

Create goals that are relevant

Your goals should be related to the direction you want your life to go. You create a deeper focus when you align your goals with your desires. Setting inconsistent goals is just a waste of your valuable time.

Create goals that are time-bound

All of your goals need to have a deadline of some sort. This gives you a time of when you can celebrate or reassess. Working towards a deadline gives you the sense of urgency you need to achieve your goals faster.

1. Write Goals Down

Physically writing your goals down makes them tangible and real, erasing the need to make the excuse to forget about it. As you jot down your goals, use words like “will” instead of “would like to.”

Frame your goal around a positive statement. For instance:

“I will hold onto employees that exist for the first quarter” instead of “I will reduce the employee turnover rate.” The first one is more motivating while the second is just a get-out clause allowing one to succeed.

Tip: Make a to-do list for yourself regarding your goals. When you use a template with your goals on top, then you can view them as the top priority.

Remember to place your written goals in a place that helps remind you every single day what you want to do. Place them on your fridge, mirrors, computer, desk, walls, etc.

1. Create a Plan of Action

This is an often-overlooked step in the process of planning goals. We become so focused on the outcome we desire that we forget to plan all the steps we need to fulfill those desires.

Write down each individual step and cross them off as you accomplish them. This is how you will realize that you are indeed making progress towards the goal. This is important, especially for long-term goals.

1. Stick with It

Setting and planning goals is an activity you will continue to do for the remainder of your life. Do not view it as a means to an end. They are built-in reminders that keep you on track to your ultimate goal and allow you to review them. While your destination may look similar for a long time, you will find that you will always be changing exactly how you get there along the way. Ensure that the necessity, value, and relevance of the goal remain high for you.

Setting goals are so much more than saying you want something to occur. If you continue to live life without clear, defined goals and understand what you truly desire, you have few odds of reaching success. Following the golden rules of goal setting will help you gain the confidence you need to enjoy the satisfaction of achievement that comes with doing what you want to do. What will you accomplish today?

CBT Techniques for Eliminating Insomnia

For some reason, most people seem to attempt to treat their sleep deprivation by swallowing pills. It has long been established that pills don't help. But this is not mean that there are no other ways of treating sleep deprivation. One of the best ways of overcoming insomnia is through Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. The following are some of the CBT techniques that help in overcoming insomnia.

•Stimulus control therapy

This technique is aimed at eliminating factors that set your mind to resist sleep. The practitioner might ask you to set consistent sleep time and wake time and avoid taking naps during the day. This technique requires that you use your bed for only sleeping. If you climb onto your bed and for some reason, the sleep won't come, you should go to some other room, and only come back when you are feeling sleepy.

•Alcohol avoidance

If you have a tendency to drink alcohol late into the night, you will find yourself struggling with sleep issues. Alcohol tends to influence

your nervous system, and it becomes hard for you to get sleep. This technique aims at keeping you away from alcohol so that you can be pretty sober when you go to sleep.

- Caffeine avoidance

Like alcohol, caffeine is just as bad. People that drink caffeine a few hours before they go to sleep will experience difficulties getting sleep. The practitioner might ask you to stay away from caffeine a few hours before you sleep. This means you will not be stimulated, and sleep will come to you much more naturally.

- Improving hygiene

In some instances, sleep deprivation might be tied to poor hygiene. Can you imagine having to sleep in a dusty, bug-infested bed? Anyone would have trouble closing their eyes. But when you clean up your bedroom and use clean sheets and mattress, it becomes a lot easier to fall asleep.

- Improving the environment

Another way to fight sleep deprivation is through making improvements in an individual's sleeping environment. This means you only have to keep the necessary things in the bedroom and get rid of the unnecessary stuff. It may not be easy because you may have developed an attachment to various things. For instance, the tv and radio have to go.

- Relaxation

This technique aims to make a person feel more relaxed. You're obviously not going to fall asleep if you're feeling tense most of the time. But then relaxing helps you fall asleep much faster. This technique involves things like meditation, imagery, and deep breathing exercises.

- Paradoxical intention

In this technique, a patient has to fight away the fear of not being able to sleep. Usually, what happens with people who have insomnia, they will throw themselves onto the bed, and start worrying that they're not falling asleep. But this technique is designed to make a person resist that kind of worrying.

- Biofeedback

This technique aims to keep watch over your heart rate and muscle

tension and show you how to adjust them. Your professional mental health assistant will hand you a device for taking various measures. This will help you understand how your body is responding to the environment.

Chapter 11. Anger Management

Getting angry usually relays an important message meant for good, but others may feel offended. Often, we get angry in the effort to be heard only to destroy relationships in the process. In intelligent communication, any form of aggression corrodes your real intent.

Communicating with passive aggression is worse as opposed to popular belief. Passive aggression may seem innocent from your words, but they are vicious. Most people opt for passive aggression, but it breaks connections. Therefore, you should consider a better strategy for a better understanding of people. Lately, people are taking to Twitter more and more for those indirect jabs.

Don't beat yourself up for getting angry, but never let yourself fly off the handle. Anger should be expressed consciously for both our mental health and physical well-being. Hiding your anger under the rag could make you sick if it is not expressed.

Unfortunately, our society today promotes avoiding our emotions, including anger. Anger expression is never taught. Our fear of speech could also emanate from past experiences of unhealthy expressions of anger. However, stuffing up your anger is worse.

Immediate Anger Expression Is Exceptional

Often, we find ourselves mad but can't remember how those feelings started. That is why it is advisable to express your feelings as they come; it helps the negativity go away faster. Extinguish the fire immediately; you see smoke; waiting for the inferno doesn't do you any good. Same for your feelings—handle them as they emerge.

Reasons for You to Express Emotions Immediately

- They become more intense when you wait. Contemplating your emotions magnifies their intensity. Getting rid of these emotions immediately saves you from more stress. It's easier to handle things before they blow up. People give advice on waiting when you're angry so that you don't regret it later. You regret actions and not feelings. Never be afraid to

express what you feel.

- There is a better understanding. Sharing your feelings immediately removes ambiguity over what made you mad or who did what. It just happened. Bottling up your emotions finds you being set off by minor issues. Confusion over the source of the sudden emotions only creates new conflict.
- It's an opportunity for clarification in case of a misunderstanding. Most times, being angry with someone emanates from a misunderstanding. You may have interpreted them the wrong way. A simple explanation over the issue clears out the air.
- It's unlikely to be fixed unless something is said. The receiving party and everyone else around you aren't mind-readers. They could never know how you feel unless you tell them. They may be part of the solution; there is no point in holding back.
- You don't have to fake it. It's draining to hide your emotions with your actions. Being true to yourself is important for both your emotional health and a healthy state of mind.
- You don't have to bottle your emotions. Avoiding your emotions doesn't make them disappear. On the contrary, stuffed-up emotions have been linked to several physiological ailments. They include depression, asthma, anger, high blood pressure, and infections.
- You are more comfortable with your feelings.
- Your feelings change. The best way to get rid of negative emotions is to get over them. You only get over them by recognizing them and expressing them in a healthy way. Psychologists agree that talking your heart out completely, although angry manifests positive feelings. I mean you always feel better if you talk to a friend.
- You create stronger bonds. People avoid their emotions in fear of being rejected. Ironically, being

honest and vulnerable provide a strong base for good relationships. You know the other person better with them expressing themselves. You also get to know how your actions affect the other.

- Your family and friends start doing the same. People close to you follow your lead if you express your feelings freely. With the same benefits, they become emotionally healthier. This makes you closer to them.

Expressing Your Anger While Conserving Relationships

In the event you are angry, neither passive aggression nor the extreme direct approach is advised. They destroy your relationships. Instead, follow the guides below:

- Become self-aware. Never be too quick to express your frustration. Instead, take a minute for cooler heads to prevail.
- Understand your emotions. Often, we confuse hurt and sadness with anger, which might be easier to express. Frustration could well be pain, sorrow, or rejection. Pinpoint on the real emotion you feel in order to communicate with honesty, hence more effectively.
- Be on the lookout for misplaced blame. Always find the root of your anger. You may just be hungry, going through stuff, exhausted, or lacking sleep. Don't dish it out to the next innocent person that crosses your path. Sometimes it's easier to assign blame as we find it taxing than to think of the real reason behind our frustrations. However, it only drives people we care about away. Nothing is resolved until the real burning issue is tackled.
- Be curious. Curiosity helps us see the bigger picture. In our frustrations, we forget there is the other person's perspective, only thinking of yourself. Try moving away from being self-centered and ask why the other person made you mad. It couldn't have been intentional. Confronting them doesn't get you real

reasons. Care a little as they might be going through something you can help. Try understanding that the other person doesn't aim to hurt you on purpose. You may even get over your anger so easily with a little understanding.

- Be compassionate. Don't be quick to assume the worst of people. Try to understand what they're going through along with their point of view. Always show respect for people's feelings, and know why they act in a certain way. This opens up for effective communication. With compassion and empathy, your relationships get deeper. Aggressive communication makes people angry and defensive in return. Allowing people to share their perspective makes them respect yours even more.
- Communicate with skill. Ineffective communication, skills like compassion, curiosity, and compromise go a long way. Don't just stop at sharing your feelings, or you'll be self-centered. Go a step further and ask the other party to share it with you. Show interest and be ready to compromise. Never accuse someone without understanding their side of the story.

How to Deal with Passive-Aggressive People

Call them out. Never give anyone a pass for showing aggression in any way. You might as well ask how they meant with their words. People don't expect to be called out when they are passive-aggressive. Ask more questions to get to the root of what bothers them. A grown-up conversation over how they feel would be one way to show them another way.

Ignore them. Even though the other party is trying to get the point across, you shouldn't be drawn into their hostile attitude. Soon as you engage, you enter the same state of mind, which is unhealthy. You live happier by letting such situations go.

Show forgiveness and a little compassion. Tension and frustration cause one to show aggression either directly or passively. Don't be so hard on such a person; they are already getting it bad. Just set boundaries for your own sake, but forgive them and wish them good vibes.

Invite them to share their own feelings and perspective. Show the other party that there is a better way of handling your aggression. Leading by example works best. When you express your negative emotions, ask them to do the same. Soon they move away from passive-aggressive tactics that only worsen their situations.

It is okay to be mad and frustrated. However, the important matter is to express it in a healthy way. Proper expression of your negative emotions can leave you feeling better. Funny enough, it might as well be a misunderstanding needing clarification. It's not healthy to be playing okay, but you're not. Bottled emotions can make you sick emotionally and physically too. You see the benefits as soon as you learn to communicate emotions effectively.

Apply communication skills. Don't be self-centered. Inquire and be ready to listen and understand the other person's perspective. As you realize, communicating truly has advantages; your family and friends follow suit and reap the same benefits. It is, therefore, important to notice people with aggressive communication and show them a better way or just avoid their interactions.

Anger usually occurs as a natural response to feeling attacked, frustrated, or even being humiliated. It is human nature to get angry. The fury, therefore, is not a bad feeling per se, because at times it can prove to be very useful. How is this even possible? Anger can open one's mind and help them identify their problems, which could drive one to get motivated to make a change, thereby helping in molding their lives.

The notion that we should avoid our negative emotions is absurd. Scream into a pillow to feel better. Pretending that some things don't get to us isn't healthy. Acceptance goes a long way in solving issues. Don't fight against your feelings. Soon you will discover that there are healthy ways to deal with it; it doesn't have to be that bad.

When is Anger a Problem?

Anger, as we have just seen, is healthy in life. The problem only comes in when one cannot manage their anger, and it causes harm to people around them or even themselves.

How does one notice when their anger is becoming harmful? When one starts expressing anger through unhelpful or destructive behavior, or even when one's mental and physical health starts

deteriorating. That's when one knows that the situation is getting out of hand.

It is the way a person behaves that determines whether or not they have problems with their anger. If the way they act affects their life or relationships, then there is a problem, and they should think about getting some support or treatment.

What is Unhelpful Angry Behavior?

Anger may be familiar to everyone, but people usually express their rage in entirely different ways. How one behaves when they are angry depends on how much control they have over their feelings. People who have less control over their emotions tend to have some unhelpful hostile behaviors. These are behaviors that cause damage to themselves or even damage to people or things around them. They include:

Outer Hostility and Violence

This is whereby one directs their anger towards people or things around them. These types of actions can be very frightening and dangerous to people around, especially children. They can cause severe consequences like the loss of a job or even injuring a loved one or just basically anyone around.

Inward Aggression

This is where one directs their anger towards themselves. Some of the behaviors here may include telling oneself that they hate themselves, denying themselves, or even cutting themselves off the world.

Non-Violent or Passive Aggression

In this case, one does not direct their anger anywhere; instead, they stick with the feeling in them. Some of the behaviors here may include ignoring people, refusing to speak to people, refusing to do tasks, or even deliberately doing chores poorly or late. These types of behaviors are usually the worst ways to approach such situations. They may seem less destructive and harmful, but they do not relieve one of the heavy burdens that are causing them to be angry.

Steps to Take in Managing Anger

In life, many things may be out of one's control. These things vary from the weather, the past, other people, intrusive thoughts, physical sensations, and one's own emotions. Despite all these, the

power to choose is always disposable to any human. Even though one might not be able to control the weather, one can decide whether or not to wear heavy clothing. One can also choose how to respond to other people.

The steps, therefore, in dealing with anger include:

A “Should” Rule is Broken

Everybody has some rules and expectations for one's behavior, and also for other people's behavior. Some of these rules include, "I should be able to do this," "She should not treat me like this," and, "They should stay out of my way." Unfortunately, no one has control over someone else's actions. Therefore, these rules are always bound to be broken, and people may get in one's way. This can result in anger, guilt, and pressure.

It is, therefore, essential first break these “should” rules to fight this anger. The first step to make in breaking these rules is to accept the reality of life that someone usually has very little control over other people's lives. The next step is for one to choose a direction based on one's values. How does one know their values? One can identify their values by what angers them, frustrates them, or even enrages them. For example, let's take the rule of “They should stay out of my way.” This rule may mean the values of communication, progress, or even cooperation. What do these values mean to someone? Does one have control over them?

What does one want in the long run?

Finally, one can act by their values. To help with this, here are two questions one should ask themselves:

- What constructive steps can one take in that direction?
- What Hurts?

The second step is to find the real cause of pain or fear after breaking the rules. These rules usually do not mean the same because some states of being can hurt one's self-esteem more than others.

To understand this better, let's take the example of Maryah, who expects that no one should talk ill of her. Then suddenly, Kelvin comes up to her and says all manner of things to her. This,

therefore, makes Maryah enraged. In such a scenario, Maryah should ask herself what hurts her. The answer to this question will bring out a general belief about Kelvin and herself. She will think that “Kelvin is rude,” “She is powerless,” or even that “She is being made the victim.” All these thoughts may hurt her. What may also hurt her most is that she has no control over Kelvin’s behavior.

Once she has noted that she has no control, she may now consider seeing Kelvin's words as a mere opinion rather than an insult. This will make her not see herself as a victim, but as a person just receiving a piece of someone else's mind about herself.

- Hot Thoughts

After one has identified what really hurts them, it is now time to identify and, most importantly, replace the hot, anger-driven, and reactive thoughts with more level-headed, more relaxed, and reflective thoughts. Here are some fresh ideas that may be of importance to someone:

Hot thought: “How mean can he be!”

Cool thought: “He thinks he is so caring.”

Hot thought: “They are stupid!”

Cool thought: “They are just human.”

All the above steps, as one may have noticed, relate to the thoughts. This is because one has first to tackle the ideas before now getting to the emotion. In this step, therefore, one is going to respond to the anger arousal itself. There are three ways that one can follow to respond to this emotion:

- One may indulge in relaxation. This relaxation can come in many forms, like enjoying some music, practicing some progressive muscle relaxation like yoga, and also visualization.
- One may also use that feeling to do some constructive work. When one is angry, there is usually a large amount of energy that one uses at that time. This is the reason that when angry, one can break down things that they would never break when calm. Imagine, therefore, how much that energy would do for someone if just directed to some constructive

work.

- One may also try to redefine anger when one gets angry. What does this mean? Once a person is angry, one can try to remind themselves of how anger is a problem that fuels aggression and can cause harm to loved ones and even oneself.

- Moral Disengagement

Moral disengagement is the process of convincing oneself that ethical standards do not apply to themselves in a particular context. In simple words, this step will help one examine the beliefs that turn anger into aggression. These beliefs usually act as mere excuses or justification for destructive acts. Some of these beliefs include “I don’t care,” “This is the only way I can get my point across,” or even “It is high time they recognize me.” These beliefs need to be identified early enough and gotten rid of before they can con one into throwing one’s morals aside. One sure way of getting rid of them is by reminding oneself of the cost of such beliefs and the advantages of striving for understanding.

- Aggression

In this step, one now needs to examine the behaviors that arise from aggression and try to fight them. Fighting these behaviors can be achieved if one calms down and puts themselves in the other person's shoes. This will help one understand why the other person is acting in such a manner, what they may be feeling, or even what they may be thinking. This approach will help to:

- Decrease the anger for all parties involved.
- Increase the chance of having a reasonable conversation with the parties involved, and thus everybody is heard.
- Outcome

The final step of this procedure is to reduce resentment towards others, and also guilt towards oneself.

You may be thinking ‘What does this have to do with my anxiety issues?’ Well, trust me, it has everything to do with resolving anxiety! Emotional awareness is all about being able to recognize and understand your emotions and how they affect or influence

your behavior.

We have already seen how anxiety issues or occurrence of a situation that triggers your anxiety issues and fear can trigger a relapse and the various ways in which you can avoid that from happening. However, during the process, there are so many emotional changes that take place, and if you are going to respond well to situations, you have to be aware of your emotions.

The good thing is that you know how you feel and the reasons why you feel that way. This simply means that you can see how your emotions can be helpful or hurtful to what you do. In such a situation, there is also a chance that you are aware of how people view you. But there is a huge difference between emotional intelligence and cognitive self-awareness, which mainly pays attention to your thoughts and ideas instead of your feelings.

Emotional intelligence is one of the core competencies that help you manage your emotions, relationships, and awareness of others. Next, we will discuss the various steps that you can follow to help you develop awareness of your feelings and how they are interconnected with your thoughts.

Step 1: Choose a triggering situation

By now, you already know the things that trigger anger, anxiety and upsetting feelings for you. Try to put them down on paper and select one that is least challenging to you just for starters. The reason why we begin with the least challenging is so that you can practice your skills successfully one at a time until you can face your worst fears.

This may take days to weeks, hence the need for patience. Try to stretch yourself out of your comfort zone while still ensuring that you do not get overwhelmed in the process. However, if you feel that this process is emotionally overwhelming, it is important that you seek help from someone that can work with you - like a therapist, friend or family member.

Step 2: Center yourself in the present while taking in slow and deep breaths

Once you know what trigger you would like to work on, it is important that you pause for a moment and close your eyes. Take in slow and deep breaths for about 5-10 minutes. Breathe from your belly and allow your whole body to come to the point of relaxation.

Focus your mind on your breath with your eyes closed. In your mind, scan your body from head to toe allowing every tension to be released. Let loose every tightness in your body so that you relax.

Now, start imagining yourself at a safe place. Try to remind yourself that you are not the emotions or the thoughts but just an observer and a person that can choose the thoughts and emotions that appeal to you. How does that make you feel? Do you feel that you are in charge of your body, responses, thoughts, and feelings? Imagine not having anyone around you making you feel what you do not want to without your permission. You are simply the observer of your emotional feelings.

Now, start shifting your mind into creating a mental note to yourself. In this note, tell yourself that the emotions you are experiencing are old energy pockets, wounds that come from your past experiences, and your childhood. Tell yourself that this is okay because, during that time, you had no cognitive ability to know or even see yourself from different points of view. Now, you have become an intelligent adult who is well able to take charge of all processes and changes taking place in your life.

Repeat it over and over until your brain gets a positive attitude towards your inner and outer person.

If you need to stop this exercise in the middle of it at any time, you can do so if necessary, otherwise, ensure that you can do it to the end without any interruptions.

Step 3: Identify and feel your emotions

While feeling centered in your breathing, start to bring that trigger into your mind. You can do this by simply trying to recall the latest/most recent occurrence. Avoid making any judgments and pause for a moment to get in touch with your feelings and sensations. Take note of any emotions and feelings you had inside.

Now, try to take deep and slow breaths while still feeling what you felt when you had the occurrence. Begin to ask yourself what you are feeling at that moment. Do you feel anger? Do you feel scared? Are you anxious? Start looking for the emotions that run beneath it. Anger is but a secondary emotion that comes on as a means of trying to protect yourself from feeling vulnerable.

Is there something that underlies that anger? Is it hurt, shame, fear

or something else? What emotional feelings do you have? Write them down on a plain sheet of paper or in a journal.

Step 4: Feel and take note of the location of sensations in your body

At this point, it is critical that you take a moment, pause and feel each emotion run through your body. Take note of the sensations that you feel at different parts of your body. For each of the emotions that is triggered, record the sensation that you feel and what part of the body you feel it in. You can do this by ensuring that you maintain the picture of your triggering event in your mind.

Ensure that while you're at it, you take in deep breaths and place your hand(s) on the place where you feel the sensation. As you do this, begin to let go of any impulse that pulls you towards judging, stopping, repressing or fixing your emotions and sensations. Keep probing your emotions and taking note of the emotional feelings until they lessen in intensity.

If you feel that anger is primary, keep asking yourself whether there is something other than anger that you are feeling. Give a description of your sensations and the body parts where you feel them. Record them and keep repeating this until you have exhausted all the primary emotions.

Step 5: Accept your feelings and have the confidence that you can handle your emotions and sensations

Here, it is important that you keep reminding yourself that your emotions do not define who you are. You are not your emotions but just an observer of your emotions. Tell yourself that those emotions that you have are energy, and your feelings are pockets or charged energy that is associated directly with your past pains and wounds.

In other words, as a choice maker for your life, you have the free-will to choose what you want. You can breathe into painful, fearful and anxious situations. As you do that, notice those sensations, and emotional feelings shift, move away and allow yourself to release them. Affirm to yourself that you have the power to accept these feelings as they are at that very moment.

Start telling yourself that you can handle it. Tell yourself that you are strong enough to handle the situation with ease, calm and wisdom. Realize that one of the most powerful leverages that you

have over negative emotions is reminding yourself about the time you had them and how you handled them successfully.

In other words, if you have been able to handle this well in the past, there is a strong possibility that you can handle it again in the present and future. Tell yourself that you have done so in the past and you can do it again and again in the future. Keep repeating the affirmations as many times as you possibly can or until you experience a smooth shift of emotional state and intensity.

Allow yourself to take in slow and deep breaths throughout the body and in between the repetitions. Bear in mind that every time you handle the emotion, you add that into your repertoire of success. This will eventually grow and strengthen your confidence as well as your ability to handle similar situations in the future. This will allow you to pick up lessons that will help you turn fear-based emotions into assets.

Step 6: Identify what you tell yourself in your mind that triggers pain

Now, start taking note of your thoughts as you picture the triggering event. Record any toxic thoughts and feelings that come through your mind. The truth is, what you think often triggers an emotional feeling and physical sensations in your body. This is just how the brain functions.

All you have to do here is to watch those thoughts from afar. Remember that you are not the emotion or the thoughts; you are simply an observer that is taking note of things as they happen without making any judgments.

Whenever you get disturbing thoughts, imagine riding in a luxurious train that is speeding. Imagine that you are looking out the window taking note of every thought or emotion that causes anger and then quickly close the window as you get back to your comfortable seat; your safe place.

Record everything that you tell yourself while you have that self-talk adjacent to the emotions and physical sensations you experienced.

Step 7: Empathetically connect so that you can understand and validate your experiences

It is important that you keep reminding yourself that even though

other people or situations may trigger a painful feeling in you, they are not the cause of your pain. It is your self-talk that is causing you so much pain. It is what you tell yourself that is triggering the resentment, anger, guilt, and frustration among other emotions you may be experiencing.

It is the thing that you tell yourself that is causing the physical body sensations that you have. Well, trust me, this is good news! The main reason why I say this is because the way you explain your triggers to yourself is the cause of your emotional feelings. It is what causes you to get upset.

The thing is, you can change that. The way to do this is to choose to tell yourself something positive no matter the situation. Think thoughts that cause you to be calm, empowered and loaded with confidence. This is the best way in which you can start making informed decisions and choices.

Start making a mental note telling yourself how this is really good news. In other words, you are telling yourself that you are the one in charge of what emotional response you experience, the thoughts that you have as well as the actions that you take.

Understand that your happiness is your responsibility. For you to achieve that peace of mind irrespective of what the triggering event is, it is only you that can find it. There is no other person that can make you feel a certain way when you do not want to feel that way. You only feel what you feel because you want to.

When you allow this to sink into your spirit, you will find yourself creating statements that give affirmations that simply validate your experience. Start telling yourself 'it is okay that I feel overwhelmed' rather than telling yourself that you cannot handle it, you can never get things done or even that it is too much for you.

That said, remember that thoughts are what trigger feelings. It is then that feelings communicate important information on how you can handle your life to thrive or survive worse situations. When you grow your awareness of the emotions and sensations that you experience, you gain more understanding of the strong connection between self-talk and what you feel.

Once you do, you realize that you have so much power that you never thought you had and hence you can now regulate your emotional state as you wish. You realize that when you make small

changes in your thought process, you chart the course of your life by simply making a conscious choice of how you experience different events. You simply experience situations in ways that enrich the direction that you have chosen.

Your painful emotions allow you to know whether you are on the right path to emotional fulfillment or not. Once you know the power that emotions have on shaping your life and the way they work hand in hand with your thoughts, it will be much easier to stop despising them. Just remember that in this sea of life, your navigation system is what you allow yourself to feel.

Indeed, CBT starts with a rather straightforward way in which we can understand a challenging situation and how we react to it. What you have to remember is that cognitive behavioral therapy focuses on the three major components of a psychological problem: thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

This simply means that when you experience a challenging situation, it is important that you break it down into these components. When you break it down in this manner, you gain clarity about where to intervene and how to do it. In other words, if there is a chain of reactions of both behavior and emotional feelings that arise from having a particular negative thought, the best approach is to go back into reexamining the thought. However, if a negative pattern of behavior seems to be the main problem, the wiser thing to do is to learn a new response to the situation.

The truth is, there is no quicker way to fix your anxiety. It takes time and commitment for you to fully overcome your fears. When you go through cognitive behavioral therapy, it is important that you face your fears head-on rather than trying to run away from them. This might make you feel worse at first, but it is only after that you can start feeling better. The most important thing is for you to try as much as you can to stick to your therapy and the advice given by your therapist.

Your pace or recovery may be slow, and this can be discouraging at the time, but you have to remember that it will be effective in the long-run. Therefore, rather than giving up, keep pressing on, and you will eventually reap the benefits. To support your therapy, it is essential that you start making positive choices. This includes everything from your level of activity to your social life and how

that affects your condition. The best route is for you to begin by setting goals and making informed decisions that will boost your levels of relaxation and functionality and offer you a positive mental outlook in your daily life.

Take time to learn about your anxiety so that it becomes easier to overcome it. Education is really important in ensuring that you know what it takes to get to the other side of recovery. True, that alone will not cure your condition, but it will help you make sense of your healing therapy.

Cultivate your support network so that you are not isolated and lonely, as loneliness can make your anxiety even worse. When you establish a robust system of support from your therapist, family, and friends, you will significantly lower your level of vulnerability. Make a point to see your support group frequently so that you can share with them your worries, concerns, and progress.

Also, remember to adopt a healthy lifestyle by engaging in physical activities and eating healthy foods. This regimen goes a long way in helping to achieve relaxation by relieving tension and anxiety. Therefore, in your daily routine, make it a point to schedule regular exercises. Also, refrain from foods and drinks that may make your anxiety worse such as those containing caffeine or alcohol.

If you are already here, then it means you have gone through this book. Congratulations. This book has been written for you dear reader that is ready to start over and do it right this time. You have been stressed, anxious, and maybe depressed not to mention having phobias that you do not know how to overcome them.

It is about time you took control of your life. Stop trying things and failing but know the secret of doing things successfully. Take charge of your life and find happiness, joy, peace, and love. With the knowledge you have acquired, you are now fully equipped to start a new journey. Start transforming your negative thoughts and feelings and live a more fulfilling life where you are in control of your actions. Start by decluttering your mind of everything that has acted as an obstacle to your success and filling it with what is of value to your life. This change in behavior will help you have better relationships and propel you towards success. With every change, you will start seeing and experiences small victories every day.

Transforming your thoughts or behavior is not easy. You are likely to face many challenges, and sometimes you will fail. Do not despair, rise up, dust yourself, and continue. Remember this is an individual journey, and so do not compare yourself with others who have made it but learn to celebrate your victories at every stage.

As human beings, we are all different. The technique that may work for one person may not work for you. Personalize the journey and find what works best for you. Start now, find your path to true happiness, peace, joy, and love by changing your behavior, transforming your feelings and thoughts.

Chapter 13.

Introduction: Social Anxiety Guide

Social anxiety is defined as the deep fear of social situations, specifically unfamiliar ones. Individuals affected by this disorder fear interacting with other people. Just the thought of putting themselves in these situations causes intense anxiety, and so they would do extreme measures to avoid such circumstances.

Social anxiety disordered individuals easily feel self-conscious. They feel like they are always under the microscope. If you are suffering from social anxiety, you would be too conscious about what other people think of you. You would not like interaction as such makes you feel vulnerable to scrutiny. You would hate being judged or humiliated. You may realize that these fears are unreasonable and exaggerated but it does not stop you from fearing. And the intensity of the fear is so overblown it feels quite real, at least to you.

Social anxiety has a huge negative impact on an individual's life. It is extremely disabling. Your self-esteem and confidence suffers severely. It may also cause a great deal of stress to your relationships. It can affect and impair your school performance or your career.

Social Anxiety versus Shyness or Jitters

It is quite common to feel the occasional nerves especially in stressful situations like speaking in front of an audience or getting interviewed for a job. Getting self-conscious is completely natural. Feeling shy is also normal. However, there is a big difference between shyness and social anxiety.

For people with this disorder, the feeling is more intense than having butterflies in their stomachs. They have this great fear of making fools out of themselves. The fear is so overwhelming that they avoid putting themselves in situations when they may embarrass themselves.

An Example Of Social Anxiety

Let's take the case of Martha. Other teens at her age are enjoying the last few weeks of school vacation while she spends her days and nights sweating profusely just thinking about how the first day of school is going to be like for her. She is counting the days and as school days draw near, she feels much more nervous. Martha is

quite aware that other teens are probably jittery as well but the jitter she's feeling is ten times worse.

Martha ended up skipping the first day of class. She just could not bear the thought of having all eyes on her as she is asked to introduce herself in front of the class. She knows she would not be able to handle the stress. She's thinking her face would turn red. She'd probably stutter and sweat too much. The thought of humiliating herself is just unbearable.

Do you feel this way?

If you identified yourself as someone who can often feel the way Martha feels, do not worry, you are not alone, and this book is going to help you to overcome your fears.

Causes of Social Anxiety:

What causes Social Anxiety?

The first important step in coping with social anxiety is gaining an understanding about what it means and what it entails. It is equally important to learn what may have caused it. Scientists cite two major causes of social anxiety: biological and environmental.

Biological Causes

According to Anxiety and Depression Association of America, social anxiety runs in families. Social anxiety may be linked to anomalies in brain activity and brain chemicals, genetics and underlying medical condition. These are all possibilities that need to be looked into.

Social Anxiety and Brain Chemistry

Researchers found a strong link between social anxiety and brain chemistry imbalances. According to research, social anxiety disordered individuals usually deal with problems involving their brain chemicals or neurotransmitters such as serotonin, gamma-aminobutyric acid and norepinephrine. These are the same brain chemicals that affect emotional stability, mood and sleep.

It is still unclear whether the imbalance was caused by poor coping strategies or the other way around. What you need to know is that therapy proves helpful in improving brain chemical regulation. It is important to understand the power of the mind in overcoming this challenge.

Social Anxiety and Brain Activity

Another possible biological cause of social anxiety is abnormality in brain activities. Researchers found evidence of a major difference between the brain imaging of people with and without the condition. The brain activity of people suffering from social anxiety shows anomalies in brain metabolism and blood flow. It is also possible that structural abnormalities in the brain cause social anxiety.

This sounds scary but rest assured that it is possible to overcome this through anxiety treatments. According to researchers, these changes in the brain chemistry are nothing but temporary. When your anxiety is properly treated, brain activity shall return to normal.

Social Anxiety and Genetics

Genetics play an important role in this condition, too. According to studies, some people are more prone to this condition based on genetic factors. It would seem that parents with the condition are likely to pass it on to their children.

Social Anxiety and Certain Medical Conditions

It is quite possible for some people to be born prone to social anxiety. However, others may acquire it as a result of certain medical conditions specifically those that affect the brain. When the brain chemistry is disrupted, it can cause increased anxiety, which makes a person at greater risk of developing social anxiety. However, when the medical condition is treated, anxiety is too.

Environmental Causes

In addition to genetics and other biological factors, researchers look into the possibility of social anxiety being caused by environmental factors. It means the things or events you have experienced in your life along with what you have been taught or even the places you go to may play a role in your condition.

Scientists came up with this conclusion based on studies conducted on twins, both identical and fraternal. Although twins share the same DNA, they may not both have social anxiety. This means genetics may play a crucial role but environmental factors should also be considered. The environmental causes of social anxiety include stress levels, upbringing, trauma, abuse or neglect and change.

Stress and Social Anxiety

Persistent and prolonged stress can take a toll on your health. It can possibly lead to anxiety as well. Many factors trigger stress but among the most common are emotionally damaging relationships and highly demanding jobs. When stress and the anxiety it causes are not dealt with properly, they tend to remain with us even if we do manage to get ourselves out eventually of the stressful situation.

Upbringing and Social Anxiety

Researchers consider the possibility of social anxiety as taught rather than inherited. As children, we look up to our parents. A child may develop social anxiety when he witnesses how his parents respond to fear. In some cases, parents may unknowingly teach their children to become fearful.

Parents mean well but they can be overprotective at times. Little do they know, the way they discipline their children has a huge impact on whether or not their kids grow up with this condition. If your parents used to exaggerate the risks or danger of talking to a stranger for instance, it is possible you've learned to fear earlier on.

When asked about their upbringing, individuals with social anxiety often describe their parents as overprotective and exaggerated, not affectionate or their worst critic. If you feel like you grew up with anxious, fearful and worried parents, you probably learned the behavior from them.

Life Experiences and Social Anxiety

Our lives are built on a series of experiences, both good and bad. Traumatic experiences like neglect and abuse may happen to us at any point of our lives. Trauma has the power to create intense responses. Some may be able to cope. Unfortunately, some respond with anxiety.

Some people are quite capable of adapting to change quickly. Others however, have a more difficult time. Changes include divorce, loss of a loved one or something smaller like a new home, school or job. What change does to us is it puts us in an unfamiliar emotional place. The unfamiliarity can cause stress. With ineffective stress coping strategies, it can develop further to anxiety.

Life changing experiences can cause anxiety. However, minor changes and experiences can also build up, which can also make us feel more anxious.

Symptoms of Social Anxiety:

What are the Symptoms of Social Anxiety?

How can you tell if what you're feeling is not just a simple case of worrying?

Here are some of the common signs of social anxiety?

Excessive worries

Has worrying become a habit for you? If you tend to make a big deal out of everything, even in the smallest things, then you are worrying too much. If the anxiety you're feeling lasts for days and most days of the month that is excessive. If you become so anxious that it interferes with your everyday life, you are probably suffering from anxiety disorder.

If your anxiety results to physical symptoms such as fatigue, there is a high probability you're suffering from the disorder.

Excessive worrying is one of the emotional symptoms of social anxiety.

In addition to too much worrying, you may be suffering from this disorder if you feel any of the following:

- Stressed out from too much worrying
- Feeling and acting foolishly
- Afraid of being negatively evaluated or observed
- Angry and frustrated with yourself
- Panic a lot showing symptoms of panic attacks
- Tired of being so anxious most of the time
- Shameful
- Self-conscious
- Always thinking about embarrassing or humiliating yourself

Irrational and overblown fears

Do you have irrational and overblown fears?

No one is fearless but if you feel overwhelming fear about specific situations like speaking in front of an audience, big or small, it is a definite sign of social phobia. The feeling of fear is paralyzing.

Excessive and irrational fear is one of the telltale signs of social anxiety, and various situations can trigger it. Young people

suffering from social anxiety, for instance, are afraid of participating in school activities and performances. They get anxious even asking someone for help. They worry excessively about exercise classes.

In general, situations that involve human interaction can provoke social anxiety including the following:

- Speaking to authority figures
- Speaking in groups
- Getting involved in peer activities
- Meeting people
- Initiating conversations
- Inability to think of anything to say to start or keep a conversation going
- Drinking, eating or signing anything in front of people
- Paying at the counter when shopping
- Inviting people at home
- Being invited to parties
- Going to public restrooms
- Going to school or work
- Having all eyes on you
- Taking exams
- Speaking up in class or in meetings
- Being criticized or teased

Sleeping issues

Do you have trouble sleeping?

Sleep problem is linked to various health conditions. It becomes a sign of anxiety when your sleep troubles happen a lot or on a regular basis. Individuals with social anxiety disorder may find themselves lying awake at night worrying either about a specific issue or nothing particular at all. Do you wake up in the middle of the night feeling wired and cannot seem to calm down? This is only one of the many cognitive and physical symptoms of social anxiety. If you are suffering from this disorder, your excessive fear and worrying may lead to these physical signs:

- Feel faint or lightheaded
- Crying
- Hyperventilation
- Feel an urge to go to the restroom
- Self-criticism
- Uncoordinated and easily distracted
- Stuttering or stumbling over words
- Mind going blank or inability to think straight
- Racing thoughts
- Concentration problems
- Poor short-term memory
- Nausea
- Trembling
- Headache
- Muscle tension or freezing
- Drying of the mouth and throat
- Sweating profusely
- Feeling hot in the face or blushing
- Grinding teeth
- Palpitations
- Trembling hands

Resistance to social interaction

Do you avoid situations that may force you to interact with people?

Because of the overwhelming anxiety you're feeling when pitted against unfamiliar situations, you tend to avoid them altogether. It is typical for people with social anxiety to go at great lengths just to avoid speaking to other people. You are probably suffering from social anxiety if you show these behavioral symptoms:

- Prefer careers and hobbies with little to zero human interaction
- Solitary
- Not assertive or timid

- Talk excessively
- Avoid eye contact
- Stay silent or speak quietly
- Prefer to stay at home
- Constant fidgeting
- Easily distracted
- Skipping classes, events and appointments
- Avoid starting conversations

Effects & Consequences of Social Anxiety:

What are the effects and consequences of Social Anxiety?

Social anxiety affects around 15 million American adults. Men and women are equally at risk to this condition. Social anxiety typically begins in childhood. For others, it occurs in early adolescence.

Being socially anxious makes you associated with these words: “quiet,” “shy,” “withdrawn,” “push-over,” “poor social skills,” “isolated” or “awkward.” The feeling of inferiority cuts deep. The life of a socially anxious person is unhappy and unfulfilling. Social anxiety can rob you off the chance to live a full life.

Loneliness

Having a family is a blessing. You may even have one or two close friends from your childhood. The problem is you're having trouble extending your personal network. All your interactions focus on your family and very few friends, and you cannot cling on them forever.

By avoiding every opportunity of making new friends or meeting people, you deprive yourself of the joy and all the possibilities of happiness relationships can give you. A person is not meant to be alone. Life is meant to be shared. Without friends, without a partner in life, you succumb to loneliness.

Constant Self-Blaming

Being socially anxious, you do not feel good about yourself. Your irrational fear of being humiliated is stronger than the desire to make a connection with other people. You don't experience fun. The worst part is you continue to blame yourself when it is your condition at fault.

Lesser Chances of Success

Social anxiety can also limit your chances of success either in school or at work. Although you are capable of more, you tend to limit your opportunities because of the things you fear. Anxiety problems take a toll on your performance. It stops you from being and doing the best that you can.

Depression

Another alarming consequence of social anxiety is depression. The loneliness can become unbearable and the low self-esteem can push you to the edge. Moreover, it increases the risk of suicide.

Substance Misuse and Abuse

To make up for the lack of company, socially anxious people may rely on other things for recreation. Such includes cigarette smoking, alcohol and recreational drugs. If social anxiety is not addressed, it can give birth to more problems in your life.

Chapter 14. How to Improve Your Social Skills

In particular, social skills refer to an element of emotional intelligence that entails interacting with other people. Social skills require one to remain considerate of other people's emotions in addition to the individual's emotions and using the understanding to communicate and relate with others daily. There are different social skills that include being an active listener, building rapport, verbal communication skills, employing non-verbal communication skills, and leadership. The social skills concern the skills required to manage and impact the emotions of other people effectively. Even though this sounds like manipulation, it is essentially initiating a positive emotion and getting others to manifest their emotions positively.

In this way, emotional skills can be taken as the ultimate piece of emotional jigsaw. A review of emotional intelligence indicates that it starts with understanding your emotions, which is self-awareness competence. Once one has understood your emotions, the next step is to handle them in what is known as the self-regulation. With controlled emotions, you can use them to accomplish your goals in what is known as self-motivation. If one understands and handles oneself, then he or she will begin to comprehend the feelings of others in what is regarded as empathy, and eventually, you will influence them in what is regarded as social skills.

Correspondingly, social skills will include the ability to persuade and impact skills in others. Social skills will also include communication skills and conflict management skills. If you possess social skills with respect to emotional intelligence, then you will also possess leadership skills. Change management skills are part of social skills, and building rapport is another social skill applied in emotional intelligence. One must also possess collaboration and cooperation competencies to become socially skilled within the context of emotional intelligence. Against this backdrop, the following is a detailed discussion of requisite competencies to build your social skills within the context of emotional intelligence.

Persuasion and influencing skills

Through persuasion and influencing skills, one will find public social space not only approachable but fulfilling. The art of showing

enthusiasm in other individuals and convincing them to buy into your ideas is known as persuasion. Persuasive or influential people will read the emotional currents in a situation and perfect what they are saying to appeal to spur involved. Persuasion is a function of communication and personality, and this demands that you become an effective communicator who is empathetic to others. Winning over people requires trying to convince them to join your course. One must learn to sell your views as a salesperson would do.

Communication skills

For one to venture into public social space and participate in satisfactorily, it requires an effective exchange of the verbal and nonverbal message. Additionally, good emotional intelligence requires good communication skills. One should learn to listen to others and channel your thoughts and your feelings. Make the individuals around you understand what is you are communicating and look for the full and open sharing of information. Part of communication skills will require that you become prepared to learn about challenges and not just wanting to process positive news. If one is a good communicator, then he or she will handle challenging issues directly as opposed to letting problems build up. Ensure that the message that you are packaging is appropriate and then register and act on emotional cues when communicating.

Notably, effective communication is about ensuring that the intended message is passed. Communication should use easy to understand language and minimize ambiguity. For instance, incorporate transition phrases to mark the shifting from one idea to another. An example of transition phrases include notably, secondly, and furthermore. While some people are born gifted communicators, most people need to learn communication. Fortunately, the best practices in communication have remained unchanged in terms of fundamentals.

Conflict management skills

Even for individuals not suffering from anxiety disorders, conflicts are difficult to handle, but fortunately, all you need is emotional intelligence, leadership, and communication competencies to navigate them. Conflicts are unavoidable and sometimes not predictable. Both at home and at work, the art of handling and resolving conflict is important. Conflict management skills begin

with becoming aware of the critical tact and diplomacy and how these competencies can be applied to defuse emotive situations. If one is a good conflict manager, then he or she will manage to expose disagreements and help resolve them. Most important is that conflict resolution does not involve you dictating the solution rather helping the affected parties identify the different opinions, the fears, and shared understanding to craft a solution. The competence of conflict resolution entails deploying sharing of emotions to motivate debate and open discussion as well as lessening the underlying problems. When resolving conflict focus more on the logical position as this is often the shared understanding among the conflicting parties.

Change management skills

Life and social interactions frequently involve changes. Change catalysts can be effective members and individuals that make a change to materialize while involving everyone. For all people involved, change tends to create pressure partly because of the fear of unknown. Good change management skills require one to make it an interesting opportunity rather than a threat. Change catalysts will acknowledge the criticality of change and eliminate barriers. Change catalysts disrupt the status quo and call for change. Leading by example is a common attribute of change catalysts to trigger desired adjustments.

As indicated, most people have difficulties adjusting to any change. Part of the fear is caused by fear of the unknown. The fear of change is also linked to attachment disorder. Most people without anxiety disorder will still struggle with change, but for individuals with social phobia, the anticipation of change heralds feeling of anxiety and uneasiness. Fortunately, one can be trained to embrace change, and this includes making one build self-esteem and social confidence. For instance, learning to focus at the moment is important to lessen the tendency to become preoccupied with what is yet to happen.

Strike a rapport

Though it appears easy and direct, most people struggle with the inherent formula to initiate communication and angle of understanding with an audience, rapport. It is critical to create and maintain constructive relationships with other people. Mastering

this skill will lead to improved relationships and increased the ability to work and succeed in life. People that are good with building bonds are great networkers, create and sustain a robust network of connections and contacts. Building a rapport involves establishing relationships to maintain it healthy. If one exhibits good rapport as a competence, then he or she is likely to have many friends. The essence of building bonds is to value others and being interested in their lives.

Team-working

Within most social interactions, one has to pair up with like-minded members to optimize their interest. Individuals with good collaboration skills will build good and useful productive working as well as other relationships, and there are people who function well with others. All these attributes are vital when building social skills in emotional intelligence. People with collaborative skills will see relationships as critical as the pending task and will value people as much as they consider the activity at hand. If you have collaboration skill, then you will actively cooperate, share ideas and plans, and work with others to create an improved whole. The conducive environment will attract other people to contribute. Individuals that possess collaboration and cooperative competence are likely to actively look out for opportunities for cooperative working. A team will perform better when good team-workers are present in the group, and this tends to attract other members to join the team. Good team-workers help the team build an identity and foster commitment.

Concentrate more on communication skills within social skills

Communication among the entire set of social skills remains highly valued and with a high impact in one's social life. Building meaningful relationships can reduce stress and anxiety in your life. Having good social support is linked to improved mental health as having reliable friends can function as a safety net for low mood and anxiety. There are people whose anxiety leads them to avoid social situations and hold them from building relationships such as social anxiety. If you are socially anxious and desperately want to create friends, but you are reluctant, then you are likely to seclude yourself from social situations. One of the adverse outcomes of social seclusion is that you will miss out on building up your confidence in interacting with others. Build robust communication

skills that would enhance the likelihood of successful relationships.

Relatedly, the pillar to cultivating and maintain friendships is communication skills. These skills are critical when developing a robust social support network. Having communication skills will help you satisfy their individual needs while remaining respectful of the needs of others. Persons are not born with good communication skills like all the other skills. You learn communication skills through experimentation and consistent practice. The three significant areas for communication are assertiveness, conversation skills, and non-verbal communication. Communication has several aspects besides the one stated above, such as presentation skills, giving feedback, and managing conflicts.

Additionally, nonverbal communication constitutes a significant component of what we communicate. In practice, what your eyes and body language speak are more potent than what you verbalize. If one feels anxious, then he or she will act in ways that are intended to avoid communicating with others. An example is when you avoid eye contact or speak softly to mask anxiety. In this instance, you are trying not to communicate and possibly avoid being judged adversely by others. Nevertheless, the tone of voice and body language communicate effective messages to others, such as your emotional state, the attitude displayed towards the listener and comprehension of the topic. In particular, if you avoid eye contact and standing far from others as well as speaking quietly, then you are communicating that the person should stay away from you or the individual should not converse with you. There are chances that this was not your intentioned message.

Assertiveness

Concerning communication, assertive communication concerns an honest expression of your individual needs, feelings, and wants while respecting those of the other person. If you are an assertive communicator, then your mien is non-threatening and non-judgmental as well as you take accountability for your individual actions. When you are anxious, you will experience some difficulty in sharing your thoughts and feelings. Even though assertiveness can be a challenge to master as being assertive can hold you back from the way you operate, it can be acquired with commitment. An illustration is when you are afraid of conflict and chose to tag along with the opinion of the masses instead of giving your opinions. In

this sense, you are becoming a passive communicator. You may target to manage and dominate others, and this is a sign of aggressive communication style. Fortunately, assertive communication approach has many benefits. Assertive communication can help you relate to others in a more genuine manner and lessen hopelessness.

Myths or misconceptions associated with assertiveness

Notably, one of the myths about assertiveness is that it implies loading your opinions on others, but this is not true. If one is assertive, it implies that he or she is voicing viewpoints and communicating honestly with others. In some instances, you might win your way by assertively voicing your opinion. Informing other people on your feelings and attempting to strike a middle ground denotes respect for yourself and others.

Another misconception is that being assertive creates selfishness, but this not true. It does not mean that you do not consider others when expressing your preferences and opinions as you are not forcing them to agree with your views. Assertiveness is not aggressiveness as asserting your position will still leave room for others to agree or disagree with your views. It is also possible to be assertive on behalf of someone else.

Relatedly there is a false belief that you can only be loved when you are passive. It is counterproductive to be passive as it suggests the tendency to always agree with other persons and always allowing them to triumph. Passivity entails giving in to their requests and making no requests of your own. Being passive does not guarantee that you will be admired by other persons. If you are passive, other persons might consider you dull and disinterested in what they are transacting.

Focus more on body language

In this aspect, body language is nonverbal cues of communication. Beginning with facial expressions the human face is highly expressive and conveys countless emotions even without verbalizing anything. Fortunately, nonverbal communications are standard as the facial expressions for happiness, anger, sadness, and fear are the same across cultures. Like most aspects of nonverbal communication, one has little control on the source and manifestation of facial expression making it a critical aspect of

evaluating the honesty of communication. From facial expressions, we can determine how one is feeling.

Additionally, there is body movement and posture. How one stands, sits, holds their head or walks affects how one is perceived by others. For example, our posture communicates much about our attentiveness and eagerness when listening to a speech. Our posture also communicates our emotional status. If one is angry then they are unlikely to appear composed and they are likely to stand upright for long or slouch for long. When one is excited, he or she is likely to change posture and movements frequently than when one feels sad. Recall when you felt highly excited, you probably walked fast, jumped, sat and stood up frequently than usual.

Relatedly, another form of nonverbal communication is gestures. Hand gestures are used to beckon, wave, point or direct. In most cases, hand gestures happen without much intervention from the conscious mind. The meaning of most hand gestures varies across cultures. An innocent message created by a hand gesture in one country may be offensive in another country. We can read the emotional status of an individual from their hand gestures even if they speak contrary. For instance, when one person is angry, he or she is likely to throw their hands in the air in an uncoordinated manner. In most instances, hand gestures contradict verbal communication, especially where one is feeling emotional and tries to mask it.

Furthermore, there is eye contact which is a critical component of body language. The way one looks at another person during communication indicates hostility, affection, interest, and confidence. Individuals that have difficulties initiating and sustaining eye contact are largely considered as shy. When one feels embarrassed, he or she is likely not to make and sustain eye contact. Prolonged eye contact at a particular person or groups of people is a stare and indicates judgment. Think of how your teacher looked at you when you were talking while others were writing. Prolonged eye contact is used to judge and intimidate.

Similarly, another critical aspect of body language is touch. A lot of meaning is attached to touch and in some cases, touch impacts the development of a person. In the formative years, children need touch, reassuring fondle to feel secure and loved. In fact, psychologists can determine bonding issues where one of the

parents shows reluctance to touch and fondle their kid. For adults, touch manifests commonly as a handshake and a hug. A firm handshake denotes confidence and familiarity while a weak handshake suggests a lack of confidence and unfamiliarity. A hug serves the same role as a handshake but hugs for individuals in love may be prolonged.

Additionally, there is space as part of nonverbal communication. Getting too close to the person you are having communication with will make them uncomfortable unless it is in exceptional situations. For lovers trying to connect more with each other, getting closer to each other may sound romantic. In teaching, there is what they call the professional distance which is the standard distance allowable between a teacher and the student when communicating. When someone gets too close then the other person may feel suffocated, trapped, and intimidated. Getting too far is also counterproductive as it makes the other person strain to participate in the communication.

For a voice as part of nonverbal communication. How loud we speak denotes emphasis. The pace of our speaking captures our emotional status. Speaking fast may indicate that one has panicked or one is feeling insecure and wants to get through with speaking as fast as they can. The tone and inflection of the voice tell more about the attitude of the speaker and the nature of the message. For instance, the message may sound standard and devoid of emotions but the tone and pitch of the speaker may bring out excitement or temper. The tone of the speaker may indicate anger or sarcasm.

While nonverbal communication can be manipulated or faked, it is difficult to manipulate all forms of nonverbal communication in one episode. It is not possible to fake tone, gestures, touch, distance and facial expressions to align with verbal communication. For this reason, body language remains a strong source of reading and ascertaining the emotional status of an individual. Nevertheless, it is possible to learn and exert control over your body language to enhance particular outcomes. Just like we learn to guide our emotions and subsequent reactions, we can exert more control over body language. There is also a possibility of receiving confusing nonverbal communication which is unintentionally sent by the source. In most cases, a confusing nonverbal communication harms relationships. At one point you might have smile unintentionally

only for your friend to think you are celebrating their losses.

Chapter 15. Overcoming Social Anxiety Disorder – How to Work through It

People who are dealing with social anxiety disorder often times choose to avoid situations they foresee will cause them to become anxious or stressed. Their fear of being humiliated, meeting new people, even eating in public cause so much discomfort that people with SAD withdraw into themselves.

Social anxiety has been linked to the risk for depression, loneliness, alcohol, drug abuse, the decrease in professional advancement, and the probability of a person never marrying.

However, all is not lost for some of these individuals. There are ways that a person with SAD can do something about improving their condition and working through it to have a healthier way of being and a brighter outlook on life.

There is a drug-free approach made by cognitive behavioral therapists that have made tremendous advances with these problems. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) has become effective in treating social anxiety disorder. The therapy focuses on your behavior and what you think.

What your thought processes are and what you are thinking plays a large part of someone dealing with social anxiety. This therapy delves into the mind of the sufferer and asks the questions that will give therapists a better idea of how to treat someone with SAD and get the person to recognize what really is the underlying reason that causes them to have this disorder.

What is a person with SAD avoiding – A person with social anxiety tends to side-step situations that provoke anxiety, which is a behavioral problem. When there is the anticipation of going to a social event, like a party, just the idea brings on the feeling of anxiousness. When they decide they won't go because for them it's just too stressful, the decision automatically decreases their anxiety.

The link between the decision to not go to the party and the reduction of their anxiety strengthens their avoiding or escaping having to go to the party altogether. (Leahy Ph.D., 2014)

The reduction of anxiety based on their decision of avoidance

reinforces the idea that avoiding what causes their anxiety is the better decision. This automatic decrease in their anxiety leads the person to believe that in order for them to feel less anxious, they should avoid going to parties or other social events.

A major factor of cognitive behavioral therapy is to have the individual with SAD go to social settings and situations and remain in them so that they can learn that nothing is going to happen to them to embarrass or humiliate them and their fears and anxiety will diminish.

The individual also learns that they are able to attend social situations and their readiness to confront their fears can be encouraging. They begin to recognize that they are someone who can actually go to social events and become inspired to do so more often.

One of the first things that can be done to help someone with social anxiety is to have them make a list of all the situations they are avoiding. The list should include how each situation makes them feel since there are varying degrees of anxiety. Some situations arouse more anxiety than others.

Scoring the fear – Identifying how each situation can be given a score in the levels of anxiety that you experience. Your behavior can be scored in terms of the level you might expect. For example, based on a behavior of no anxiety at all to the extreme, panic attack anxiety, no anxiety would be scored at zero while the extreme behavior of a panic attack would be scored as a 10.

The situation of going to a party will be scored by the level of anxiety each segment concerning the party is looked at. Thinking about the party prior to attending would be a 3, going to the party would be a 5, walking into the party and seeing people at the party would be a 6, making an attempt to have a conversation would be an 8. This is how just one situation – attending a party- can be scored.

Writing down how you predict you will feel is important so you can compare how anxious you actually are when you go. In the predicted scoring, some people found that their predictions of how they would feel were higher than what they actually experienced when they attended the party.

Testing the predictions – We frequently forget that we manage

better than we think we can handle our anxiety. You can write down what you think about how anxious you believe you'll be for each situation.

What did you predict about your level of anxiety? How long did you remain in that anxious state? These questions will help to test your catastrophe predictions.

For example, making the attempt to have a conversation with a few people at the party was scored as a predicted 8. The person who scored this not only thought the anxiety level would be this high, the also thought they would get tongue-tied and would become so anxious that they would have to leave the party. (Leahy Ph.D., 2014)

What actually happened is they were initially anxious during the beginning of the conversation. But once the conversation began to have a flow and the person became more comfortable, the anxiety level was reduced to a 3. The person did not leave the party and enjoyed the conversation more than they thought they would.

It is a good idea to be clear about what you predict so you can determine whether what you're expecting as a level of anxiety is more than what actually happens. Keep a log about your predictions to compare how anxious you actually become, and whether you begin to improve and see your anxiety levels diminish each time you expose yourself to what you've feared.

Identify and remove safety behaviors – People who have social anxiety take part in behavior that they believe will keep them safe or less likely to humiliate or embarrass themselves.

Some of these “safety” behaviors include using drugs or alcohol to self-medicate themselves, avoiding eye contact, continually wiping their hands to hide that their hands are sweating, rehearsing what they would say, talking very fast, and holding their glass very tightly so people can't see their hands shaking.

The biggest problem with these safety behaviors is that you believe using them are the only way you can shoulder through these experiences by using them each time you're faced with an anxious situation.

Rather than leaning on these behaviors and using them as a safety blanket, giving them up will give you a feeling of having more

control and power over your anxiety. You'll be thinking about how you got through situations that would normally provoke your anxiety and did it without rehearsing what you would say or without having a drink to fortify yourself.

Challenge yourself and your negative thoughts – Your predictions of how badly you'll do, how you'll make a fool of yourself and will become embarrassed, how people will notice you're being sweaty, how you trip over your words and that they'll talk about.

You think all these things are catastrophic, but these thoughts can be challenged. Asking yourself whether you actually made yourself look foolish or are you predicting that the same things will happen over and over?

- Could it be that no one is noticing your hands shaking or your palms sweating because they're thinking about what they're going to say while having the conversation with you?
- Is there any evidence that your anxiety is what people are talking about? Do you really know what they're talking about?
- Why do you think people care about your anxiety? Does it relate to them in some way?
- Have you ever heard someone else remark that they forgot what they were going to say? Did something bad happen when they said that? (Leahy Ph.D., 2014)

Other negative thoughts and beliefs that add on to the fears and anxiety include:

- Thinking you'll end up looking foolish
- The anxiety and nervousness will come out in your voice and you'll embarrass yourself
- You believe people who are new will probably think you're stupid

An effective way to reduce your symptoms of social anxiety is to challenge these predictive and negative thoughts. Predicting what is

going to happen and believing that it's happening while you're in the situation that causes your anxiety may be the reason you set yourself up to feeling the anxiety that you don't need.

Do what makes you anxious – Now that you've identified what makes you anxious in situations and you've scored what affects you from the least to the most anxious, it's time to face your fears.

It helps to imagine each step of the situation and how your anxiety manifests as you think about the example that we've been working on – going to a party. Each step of the situation is what you previously scored; ranking each step by the level of anxiety you predicted you would feel.

Begin with picturing yourself walking into the party and having the thought that everyone can see that you're anxious. At that moment realize that no one can see your inner feelings. They're focusing on themselves and the other people they may be greeting or may be having conversations with others. They may be thinking about their own concerns and perhaps, their own anxiety. Continue to picture this thought and let go of the anxiety.

You can start practicing what makes you anxious and what you fear. Don't have a drink before you go to the party. Rather, walk into the party, acknowledge that you may have a moment of anxiety and continue to walk in while saying you'll walk in and greet people even if I feel anxious.

Having anxiety at the moment you enter the party is okay. The point of acknowledging it is so you actually learn you can do things while you're feeling anxious and there's no disaster.

It may seem an impossibility to overcome a social situation that provokes your anxiety and fears, but it can be done a step at a time. It begins with a situation that you work your way through to handle and graduate to more challenging situations.

This type of procedure builds your coping skills and your confidence as you make your way to a goal that you set to be less anxious or eradicate your anxiety entirely.

For example, you've become more comfortable and have reduced your anxiety about attending a party. The next step can be that you introduce yourself to at least one new person at each social event.

It may be nerve-racking and escalate your anxiety in the

beginning, but if you employ the lessons you've learned when you took the first steps in going to a party and apply them, you may be surprised how it becomes easier to extend your hand in a greeting to someone new.

Give yourself a reward – People who are socially anxious frequently review themselves and how they performed. They self-critique everything they did or said after attending a social situation. This post-social event critique adds to the anxiety of what you think will happen at the next social situation.

Rather than self-critiquing, it would be good to replace it with congratulating yourself for confronting your fears and doing what you had difficulty doing before. You can reward yourself for just going to the party and trying to go through with it even though it was uncomfortable.

Every time you confront your fears, you will win and overcome another portion of your anxiety. (Leahy Ph.D., 2014)

Thought processes that promote social anxiety – You need to consider whether or not you're taking part in unhelpful styles of thought like personalizing where you think and assume that people are attentive or focused on you negatively.

Other types of thoughts that are unhelpful are mind reading and fortune telling.

When your mind read you assume what other people are thinking and they view you in the negative way you view yourself.

Predicting the future you assume the worst will happen even before the situation is a reality. You assume that whatever the event is – a party, a business event, or meeting new people – will go terribly. You're feeding into your anxiety even before you're in the reality of the event.

Turn your attention to others, not on yourself – When we're nervous because of a social situation that makes us stress and brings about our anxiety, we tend to get involved in our thoughts about how anxious we are. You may feel that everyone is judging you, and you focus on your body's sensations. In doing this you feel that you will have more control. (Smith M.A., 2019)

However, the extreme self-focus only increases your awareness of how anxious and nervous you are feeling, exacerbating your

anxiety. This self-focus distracts you from focusing on the people and conversations around you.

Rather than internalizing and focusing on your anxiety, externalizing and concentrating on others can help in reducing your social anxiety. You can't pay attention to your inner anxiety and the external conversations at the same time. The more you give attention to what's going on around you, the less your anxiety will affect you.

Pay attention to other people by engaging them in conversation and focusing on what they're talking about rather than thinking about what you think they're thinking of you.

Realize that your anxiety isn't that visible. It's only because you are feeling anxious that you believe others can see it. Even if someone does notice your nervousness, it doesn't mean they're judging you or thinking of you negatively. It may be that the person who recognizes your nervousness is because they've felt that way as well.

Listen to what the other person is saying and be in the moment. Don't worry about what you're going to say or focus on any mistake you may think you've made and resist from listening to the negative thoughts in your head. Stop beating yourself up. (Smith M.A., 2019)

Control your breathing – your body goes through many changes when you are anxious. Your breathing is quicker and if you are having extreme anxiety you may hyperventilate and become dizzy, your heart rate increases and have a feeling of suffocating.

Slowing your breathing can help bring your physical symptoms under control.

The process to work through social anxiety takes time and patience. The techniques that can be used to begin the process of managing your anxiety need to be applied almost daily in the beginning. However, over time and with practice, you may begin to see a difference in your attitudes and a diminishing of the fears you had in the beginning.

Facing your fear of social situations is a systematic, gradual process. It's better to face them than to avoid them.

You may benefit from additional guidance and support from a therapist if you are attempting to use the self-help practices and

exercises on your own and run into any roadblocks.

Chapter 16.

How to Deal with Stress to Get Rid of

Anxiety

Run the Stress Off

Running is a great way of combating stress. It is one of the easiest and beneficial physical exercises anyone can engage in. If you are feeling beat down by the rigors of life, take a run down your street or get to the nearest field and run a few laps. There are several benefits that you will experience if you run regularly:

- Running being an aerobic exercise. This increases the heart rate and makes you sweat, stimulates the release of endorphins, which are the body's natural feel-good chemicals, leaving your brain elated, and making you happy.
- You will shed calories, which will help with lowering your blood pressure and keeping your arteries in good shape.
- Running slows the aging process and reduces bone and muscle loss by building strength and flexibility. It keeps you active and improves your overall health.
- When running, you have all the time to yourself, which allows you to process your thoughts. You may use the time to aid you with sorting out some issues that you may be facing or to think through a problem.
- Researchers have found out that people who are regular runners lead a happier, more stress-free life and are generally fitter than those who do not. Your concentration and alertness are also enhanced.

Now, put on those running shoes and hit the road for a healthier, happier, and stress-free life. Running can be done almost anywhere you go. You do not have to worry about where to perform this exercise. It is recommended that you drink a lot of water if you are a runner. Drink at least a liter of water an hour to two hours before your run. This helps with the hydration of the

body, and you are unlikely to suffer dehydration.

You will not regret your decision as the benefits that will accrue to you are many.

Take a Hike

Hiking is a relaxing walk through natural surroundings, usually at a nature trail, a park, or a forest. Much like running, hiking is a great exercise for stress relief, though less vigorous. Hiking combines the benefits of an effective aerobic exercise, serene natural surroundings, and the chance and time to relax and think freely.

The following are ways by which hiking helps the body to deal with stress:

Mental Relaxation

Hiking provides the time and opportunity for mind relaxation by getting you up close to nature. Nature has been proven as a catalyst to mental relaxation by giving you the experience and wonders of natural surroundings.

Energizing the Body

Hiking being an aerobic exercise invigorates the body and helps with the regulation of stress chemicals. People who hike regularly have higher levels of feel-good hormones, like endorphins, which reduce stress considerably.

Emotional Well-Being

When you are stressed, you are a prisoner of negative emotions, like sadness, anxiety, nervousness, etc. Hiking will activate positive energy in your body, which will, in turn, boost your emotions to make you feel better and happier.

Brain Exercising

A hike will afford you the silence and time to think profoundly about things that are important to you. Aerobic exercise coupled with deep thinking will effectively enhance the body's stress management capabilities.

Spiritual Nourishment

Being in a natural environment with the wonderful serenity

offers the body a chance to get spiritually fulfilled. Your nerves will be calmed, and you will get the opportunity for mental clarity and relaxation that you would normally not have every day. Hiking is a great exercise for anxiety and stress relief, and you ought to prepare in advance before you go on a hike. Pack a first-aid kit, drinking water, and a phone in case you may be confronted with an accident.

Come on, why don't you start hiking for a change? It may just be the answer to dealing with the stress you have been under lately. So book an appointment with nature for exercise, mental and spiritual fulfillment, and say goodbye to stress and anxiety.

Pedal the Stress Away

Do you remember how happy you were riding your bicycle when you were young? I remember my experience, and I could give anything to feel the same way again—excited, happy, and with a sense of unbridled freedom. It was just a great time without a care in the world. Well, you do not have to look back to your childhood with such nostalgia because you can readily bring back those feel-good moments you had on your bicycle then to the present to replace all the anxiety and worries you are facing now!

Don't you want to?

Cycling is another form of aerobic exercise, which is great for stress relief, fitness, and general well-being. When you are overwhelmed by life's pressures, simply hop on a bike and start pedaling for stress relief. Being on the bike will take your mind off the problems that are bothering you, pump some feel-good chemicals into your bloodstream, and pace your heart to leave you feeling refreshed and emotionally elated.

You can cycle after work, on weekends, or your day off. You can even cycle to work. While doing this, employ the meditative technique of mantra by chanting a positive phrase or word to the rhythm of your pedaling. I assure you that you will be surprised at how fast your mind will be cleared of the negativity and stress that you are facing.

Cycling is not an expensive endeavor. Just buy a bicycle, and you may start. It is not vigorous if done for leisure or exercise and can be taken up by people of all ages. Cycling will keep you fit. Work out your heart for better health and emotional balance. It

helps with the management of chronic conditions, like diabetes, cardiovascular problems, and high blood pressure. The healthier and better you feel, the less likely you are to be stressed. Get on your bike, and enjoy the stress-relieving benefits you have been missing.

Reading for Stress Relief

Reading is cathartic and is a great reliever of stress for people who are facing everyday pressures and adversity by relaxing the brain and managing the thought process. When you read, your mind travels away from the pressures you are facing. You sink into the story where you will find yourself in faraway worlds. In the duration of your reading, you shall be transported away from your troubles, and this helps in balancing your emotional well-being.

Reading is a great mental exercise that stimulates brain activity, thereby improving mental concentration and alertness. Stress-fighting chemicals that give you a happy feeling are released into the brain. An active mind is strong and more likely to cope with daily pressures. You will also fight stress from the motivation and hope you derive from reading biographies and motivational books. Books and other literature are sources of information that enables you to learn more and aid in problem-solving.

A book will divert your thoughts from the lingering problems or worries that are stressing you out. Set aside a few hours in your day to read, and you will experience how fulfilling it can be in your efforts at dealing with stress.

When you clear your mind of negativity even for a few hours, you will make huge strides in mental relaxation. With a relaxed mind, you should be able to be more creative and relaxed enabling you to cope with stress. An active mind also slows down the aging process, leaving you feeling younger physically and mentally. A strong, healthy body is less prone to stress.

If the last time you read was for an exam or for a school assignment, make a hot cup of tea, make yourself comfortable on your favorite seat, and immerse yourself into a book. The benefits for your life and health are great—you need to try it. Get literature that appeals to you—a book, magazine, or newspaper—and make it a habit to read regularly for a less stressful life every day.

Be a Positive Thinker

Have you heard of positive thinking? Well, the world works in a very simple way in that whatever you think is what will be manifested in your life. You attract what you think! It may seem simplistic or difficult to accept, but take the time to mull it over and you realize that it is true. If you want to get that new job you applied to or want to get promoted, it begins by you wanting it then believing that you can get it without having a shred of doubt.

Self-belief is a powerful stress reliever. To always be positive and to be ever optimistic. The power of positive thinking is incredible. If you look forward to good things, you will have a happier, less stressful life. Positive thinking is a state where you look forward to favorable outcomes in whatever you do. Positive thinking, therefore, involves actively training your mind to have creative thoughts that transform energy into reality.

Avoid dwelling on your failures and concentrate on the successes. Use the disappointments as lessons for the future. Studies show that positive thinking leads to a longer and healthier life since you are less prone to stress. You become a positive thinker by identifying the negative aspects of your thinking and avoid them while constantly evaluation your thoughts to make sure you stay on the positive.

Do not be too hard on yourself, allow yourself joyous moments and take time to have fun. Surround yourself with like-minded people who will help you build the habit of positive thinking. When you are optimistic, you become less critical and are instead more creative and hopeful. An optimistic mindset is able to deal with stress at work more easily and constructively. Positive thinking is a powerful tool in fighting stress and anxiety. Try it, and you are sure of great benefits and a happy, relaxed life.

Time Management

If you are always late and short of time, then you are most likely leading a stressed and anxious life. There is nothing as stressful as the struggle to always meet a deadline or catch up with something you forgot about. Using the little time we have properly will help you cope with stress. Time management involves methods aimed at using time efficiently to perform all the tasks we have within a given time. It involves prioritizing, scheduling, and organizing.

You must assess the tasks on your plate and put them in order of importance and urgency to avoid confusion, conflicts, and unnecessary time pressures. Plan things in advance to avoid last-minute scrambling in an effort to get something that skipped your mind done. Good time management makes you a more productive person. You will do more within a short time, thus gaining more control of your life.

Create a schedule and stick to it. You will have enough free time to engage in fun things that you have been missing. You will have time to go to the movies, play a game or any other fun activity that serves to boost health and well-being. Good time management means that you have enough time for work, family, and friends. These moments with loved ones are most fulfilling and stress-relieving.

It does not take much to be a good time manager. All you need is to start and commit to it. Well-managed time leads to a more comfortable and happy life. Below are the benefits of time management for a less stressful life:

- doing more with less time
- getting more free time, which allows time to relax
- reduced stress since you do not worry about pending deadlines
- higher productivity since you are fresh mentally, physically and highly motivated

Time management is good because you will be happier, more successful, and more productive. You will also live a fuller and stress-free life. Why don't you start managing your time better and enjoy the benefits?

Get Enough Sleep

Are you sleeping enough? Lack of adequate sleep is a big contributor to incidences of stress and anxiety. Getting sufficient sleep is essential in your effort to deal with stress. During sleep, your body gets the chance to rest, to heal, and to be rejuvenated. When you do not get enough sleep, you are left susceptible to stress and other health problems because you are emotionally imbalanced.

Therefore, it is imperative to have a sleeping schedule and follow it so that you condition your body into a routine for sufficient rest. In fact, sleep deficiency is a great source of stress and anxiety since you are tired, irritable, and have weakened creativity. Between work and your personal affairs, you probably end up not getting enough sleep. It is recommended that you sleep for at least six hours for optimal rest. However, many of us do not meet this target as studies show that most of us sleep for as little as two hours and a maximum of four hours in a twenty-four-hour cycle!

We do not get sufficient sleep because of our poor bedtime habits that end up interfering with our sleep. To sleep better and longer, try the following:

- Set a sleeping schedule. You will sleep better if your bedtime is predictable. Your body will adapt, and you will rest more.
- Do not indulge in a heavy meal during dinner. Have a light meal at least two hours before you retire to bed.
- Physical exercise is a great sleep inducer. Work out three to four hours before you sleep.
- Do not take caffeinated drinks close to your bedtime. Your last caffeine drink should be averagely six hours or more before you lie down.
- Keep away from alcohol four to six hours before your bedtime. It will disrupt your sleep.

Sleep well for emotional balance. You will wake up refreshed, well-rested, and energized. When your body has this balance, it can easily manage or ward off stress.

Listening to Soothing Music

Music is very relaxing and has the ability to change moods positively by acting on our minds to avert stress. It acts quickly, is available, and will relieve you of stress and anxiety. The calming effect of music has a distinctive relationship to our emotions and is an effective way to cope with stress. Slow classical music is extremely peaceful and has a positive effect on our bodies and minds. This kind of music has its advantages. It slows the heart and pulse rates and reduces the production of stress hormones and

blood pressure.

Music engrosses our thoughts to distract us from whatever worries may be lingering in our minds. Most times, when you are stressed and anxious, your mind tends to wander off, causing you to think of the things that cause you more anxiety. However, music acts as a cushion and helps your mind to relax and better concentrate.

Music is food for the soul. The next time you are facing adversity or are feeling down from mental fatigue or some other worries, turn on your favorite music. Enjoy the relaxing and positive vibes that will be provided by the music.

Work-Life Balance

“All work with no play makes Jack a dull boy!” This old saying is very true. You need to have some time away from your job to have fun and engage in things that excite you and pump your blood. Most adults who are stressed can trace the source to their workplace because we spend a lot of time on the job. It is, therefore, important to balance the time we spend working and time for ourselves for a healthier lifestyle.

Work-life balance is about dividing your time effectively and adequately between work and your private life. If you let work consume most of your time, you neglect or shortchange your personal needs, and you will end up stressed. When your personal life is in order, you are less likely to be stressed since you will worry less. Your mind will not be stretched from being divided between what you need to do at work and the personal matters awaiting your attention.

Spend time with family and friends. It is relaxing and healthy for you. When was the last time you went cycling or shopping with your children? These mundane activities are the foundation to a well-balanced, healthy life devoid of stress. If your private life brings you happiness, you will be able to face pressures that come your way. After spending time with your loved ones, you need to set aside personal time for things that are self-gratifying. Go for a massage or run a few laps at the neighborhood field. Volunteer your services for a worthy cause. Such acts are great for boosting your emotional well-being.

If you embrace a healthy work-life balance, you will reap the many benefits. Personal nourishment and care are important for overall health. Balance your private and professional life for a stress-free, healthy life where you are happier and revitalized.

Chapter 17. Dealing With Rejection

Using and having the correct mindset and perception is essential when it comes to the issue of dealing with rejection in social situations. That's because, without the right approach towards denial, your brain will be consumed with fear, then anger and you lose your composure. The way you perceive a thing and understand it would go a long way in defining how you would interpret it and how you would go about reacting to it.

Sometimes, it could be the fear that the other person won't find you attractive, funny or remotely interesting enough. You may fear that you'll do something awkward or silly which will turn the other person off. You may even be afraid of future rejection - for example, maybe the initial social situation goes well, but down the road, the other person doesn't want to continue a relationship with you even after your first (seemingly) positive interaction.

These are just a few of the endless scenarios that your mind may conjure up when we talk about the FEAR of being rejected in a social setting. But this shouldn't be so. Rejection doesn't say you are flawed, or wrong or not good enough. You have to see it as rejection, they don't want you, and this had nothing to do with you. It is just their choice, and everyone is like that. I understand how much rejection eats deep into a person and wrecks their resolve and confidence, but if we can culture our mind to a positive way of looking at rejection, then we can interpret it better and maybe, just maybe, denial won't deflate our confidence when it does come.

But In reality, the rejection should be the least of your worries. It's that fear that's the REAL problem. That fear is crippling in many ways – 3 ways, specifically.

Fear Takes You Out of the Game

Fear is the opposite of faith. Fear is what comes before you get into an actor take action, fear sneaks into your joints, and while faith would push you and encourage you, and show you the strong points and advantages of doing a thing, fear would dissuade you, it would weaken you and give you every gory detail and embarrassing reason to not do anything. Every time you submit yourself to the fear of rejection, you unknowingly enforce that fear and make it

stronger. The fear of rejection puts you out of the game; it makes you run away from stepping out to initiate contact. It sings all the tragedies of rejection, mystifies the scenario before you, and makes sure you slither back into your cave rather than step out and do a thing. Eventually, you become hypersensitive to social situations and settings that don't even warrant the anxiety being triggered inside of you.

And, I'm not talking about poignant moments in life like a first date or a job

interview, I'm just talking about socializing with friends at a casual gathering.

When that fear of rejection gets reinforced, after a while it grows so strong that the anxiety it induces becomes an automatic response to social situations. Walking up to a person or being approached, talking to a person or playing the audience.

The result?

You avoid social interaction and isolate yourself, then you create a haven for yourself and slowly begin to bolster the reasons why you are better off alone, further solidifying your social anxiety and the fear that fuels it. It sounds like an unbreakable cycle doesn't it?

Well, don't worry – I'll show you how to change that shortly. Bear with me for just a moment here because it's essential you understand your enemy – this ever debilitating fear.

Fear Sabotages Your Confidence

The second way that fear acts in holding you back from doing things and initiating contact is by sabotaging your confidence. As adrenaline pumps through your veins in social situations rather than make you rise above your regular wits, it would turn to a shock response. The same adrenaline rush that is supposed to heighten your senses and uplift your mood and fill you with witty ways to go about your interaction now becomes that force that blocks you. It begins to scream flight or run, and to see that your body is linked to your mind, your body begins to react negatively, filling you with discomfort and further pushing you away. This fear will restrict the authentic you that will attract others.

It dulls your personality in many ways because you'll be too self-conscious to enjoy yourself and that will feed into your

conversations by giving others an unspoken, uneasy feeling. The fear picks out and heightens the features that repel it, and it shines a light on it. The flow of social interaction is interrupted by awkwardness that's hard for either party to explain. The low self-esteem you emit will make hang out there and be a looming deterrent to your otherwise good nature, and further act as a repellant between and others.

Fear Generates Defensive Hostility

Finally and perhaps most damaging, fear of rejection can frequently create a habit of defensive hostility. Because you're so worried about being rejected, you may come into the practice of denying others before they have the chance to hurt you. Fear makes you create a barrier around yourself and forces you deeper into your shell. Fear makes you spooky and overly cautious of things and scenarios you shouldn't be jumpy about.

Although it isn't a universal truth, if you get rejected enough and process that rejection in an unhealthy way, it can condition you to push others away preemptively or, instinctively feel negative about others for no legitimate reason.

Unfortunately, this habit causes you to lose even more self-esteem because the reality is, you know you're wrong for making these unreasonable judgments on others before you also get to know them. Fear makes you a horrible person and causes you to kick out others even when they are not close enough yet.

Try not to be too hard on yourself if you're guilty of having defensive hostility. The truth is, your mind is trying to protect itself from the anxiety of rejection. It may be going about it in the wrong way but – you're not a bad person for feeling this way. It is just the fear, and you have to acknowledge that and begin to make conscious decisions and take constructive actions to fight against it. You have to start rebuilding your confidence and self-esteem in yourself.

How to Interpret Rejection

Okay, so now that we've gotten all that ugly stuff out of the way, now we have handled all the repealing sides – I'm going to show you why rejection is a powerful ally to both your personal development and your ability to form unusual, fulfilling social connections.

Quick though, before I get into my super positive spin on rejection, I want you to do me a favor.

I want you to get away from the thought process of “What’s wrong with me?”.

What is wrong with you, is the wrong question to ask, and the wrong way to perceive rejection. Most times when you get rejected, you may immediately begin to internalize the loss and turn on yourself - thinking things like.

“What did I say?” “What did I do wrong?”

“Is there something wrong with me?”

"Am I not good enough?"

"That guy that got accepted, in what way is he better than me?"

It is like putting your car in reverse when the destination you’re trying to reach is right in front of you. You need to figuratively switch gears and change the way you immediately react to the rejection.

When you point fingers at yourself, nothing will ever be resolved or improved in terms of social anxiety. You need to embrace yourself. Every flaw, every faux pas should be celebrated and instantly forgiven. Then and only then can you move forward, only then can you embrace yourself and see rejection from less harmful and damning light.

Spending time torturing yourself after a social rejection will only make things worse so if you catch yourself playing the victim – interrupt the thought and focus on the next bits of philosophy.

Philosophy of Rejection

In life, in social situations, some people will resonate with you and some people will not. You cannot please everyone. Pleasing everyone should never be your goal – it’s counter-productive. The fact that you were rejected doesn’t speak ill or sour of you; in fact, it had nothing to do with you; it is just about the other person. Everyone has their own choices and preference, and you should tailor your mind to understanding that their options are not universally the best, it is just their choices.

That’s because when you adapt your personality too sharply to fit into the paradigm of someone else’s character, you rob yourself of

your integrity. You become a shadow of who you are and should be. And this goes ahead to steal you of your uniqueness and take away that new bit and color that makes you who you are and should serve as your most attractive feature.

You change who you are.

That action alone takes away from your authenticity, and it's a move that is unsustainable in the long-term.

So, do not fool yourself into thinking that everyone can and should love you. It is not feasible; it is not even ideal for everyone to love you. Those who would like you would do so knowing who you indeed are and for who you are. Talk about loving unconditionally, because you are you. And those who wouldn't, those who would reject you, well, these people don't matter. And it is no fault of yours.

The Risk and Reward of Rejection

When you put yourself "out there" in a social setting, it may feel like you're putting yourself in a vulnerable place. Sometimes it feels safer to stay indoors and in your comfort zone and enjoy your space, rather than stepping out and exposing yourself to public opinion, to people of dissenting views and characters. After all, aren't you putting your pride on the line, your ego even?

Once you change your mindset and realize that there is nothing to lose, it becomes easier and more comfortable to suppress the fear of rejection. You begin to become more outgoing and more challenging.

Why do I say there's nothing to lose?

Well, think about it. If you get rejected in a social setting, you're still better off than if you would have done nothing. The outcomes are not conscious. That's because you gain experience AND you're participating in life which subconsciously reinforces your confidence. You get to understand better how to approach people. When you lose, you learn, and you try again, better than the last time.

Whether you get rejected in a social situation or not, you're facing your fear and conquering it. You are getting bolder; you are building a stronger self. Focusing on that fact alone will make diving into a social gathering easier because it becomes an exercise for your self-esteem.

Social success is a numbers game. Yes, you can align yourself with the right groups and increase the probability of acceptance, but ultimately everyone has a social circle. It's just a matter of trial and error to find the one that fits.

The tricky part is moving on after being rejected and putting yourself into the next social situation.

But, once you understand that it only wasn't meant to be, you take the onus or failure off of your shoulders and give yourself the strength to confidently move on. You learn to highlight and dwell on the good ones, on the lessons, and the small victories.

It's your world, no one else's. So navigate yourself towards people who love you and don't settle for anything less. After all, you deserve the love that you're seeking. You deserve to see, to be heard, to be loved and acknowledged. Just go out there, play the numbers game and don't stop till you find your social success. You are on the right track already, take charge of your life.

How to deal with rejection

1. Acknowledge Your Emotions

Instead of suppressing, ignoring, or denying the pain of rejection, you should acknowledge your emotions. Admit that it makes you embarrassed, disappointed, or discouraged. Have confidence in your ability to cope with uncomfortable feelings head-on unfortunate this is essential to dealing with the discomfort healthily.

No matter what has caused the rejection, whether you were turned down for a job or promotion or you were stood up by a date, rejection stings like a scorpion bite. If you try to minimize the pain by convincing yourself or anyone around you that it was 'no big deal', then your grief will only be prolonged. The most efficient way if dealing with uncomfortable emotions is to face them head-on.

2. See Rejection As Pushing The Limits

Rejection serves as excellent proof that you're living life to the fullest. Whenever you're making a move, expect to be rejected, and it will make you unafraid to go for it.

If as a human you never get rejected, it may mean that you're living too far inside your comfort zone. You will not be sure that you're pushing yourself to your limits until you get turned down time and time again.

When you get rejected for a particular thing, you'll be self-aware and know that you're putting yourself out in the world.

3. Treat yourself with compassion

When you get rejected, do not berate yourself and tell yourself that you're stupid for making the step. Treat yourself with kindness. When you give yourself negative self-talk, respond with a kinder, more affirming message.

No matter what happened to make you rejected, beating yourself up will only let you stay down. Talk to yourself like a trusted friend. Swallow your harsh inner criticism by repeating mantras that will keep you mentally healthy.

4. Never let the rejection define you

As a person seeking improvement, try not to make generalizations when you're rejected. If you're turned down for a job, don't go ahead and declare yourself incompetent. If a lover denies your love interest, don't conclude that you're unlovable.

Do not let one single incident or one person's opinion to define who you are. You should increase your self-worth and don't make it be based on dependent on other people's opinion of you.

5. Learn From Your rejection

So you faced rejection, and you are feeling down, lighten up. Ask yourself, 'what did I gain from this situation?' It will help you evaluate and know what you learned from the rejection. Instead of only tolerating the pain, why not turn it into an opportunity for self-growth. With each denial, you should grow stronger and become better.

Rejection can be a good teacher. You may learn about areas in your life that need to be improved upon, or you may surprisingly learn that being turned down is not as awful as is imagined. Take advantage of rejection and use it as an opportunity to move forward with more wisdom.

Chapter 18. Conversations

Communication has a lot of aspects of it which are glued and without them, there would be no communication. These aspects the means or mode of communication, sending an elaborate message for the recipient to understand, also the recipient is key too, the ability of the recipient to understand the sent message and finally the response to the message. The aspects give communication the basic feel of being real and effective. If one of the aspects is absent, then communication will be absent too or will not take place. All of the aspects are equally important despite their different roles. Communication happens in our day to day lives. This may be in small conversations with friends or at work and in a presentation maybe for a board of directors or at a seminar speaking about a certain topic to a group of people.

Communication helps to bring people together. It leads to people giving out messages and receiving them. Communication takes place in many ways. For example: by phone, by letter and signs too. Communication has made the world become like a small village this is because one can talk to people on different continents as themselves. With communication being at the top of its people easily be can be apart and together. This means that they may be far from each other physically, but not in their everyday communication. Communication is a quite interesting and easy subject because of its diversity. Everyday communication happens and everywhere else. Communication helps to keep people fresh and new. Every day they expect something new and vibrant, thus they must experience, new friends and people every day and this is courtesy.

Communication is what makes humans really human. What I mean is that a man has language, well-developed one at that he is different from all other animals. Other animals make sounds and noises, which is their way of conversing with each other, which is unlike many. This special and it makes communication in man to be very unique and exciting for everyone to know and understand. Communication is the component that puts us forward 100 percent. Without it, things would never be smooth. Every day, a man finds a new way to communicate and he puts it to the test. Normally, these

new ways are majorly easier ways to communicate with other people no matter where they are. These new ideas come from intelligent people every day. Intelligence is built up from communication and man's other success.

. The non-verbal skills are important for communication is based on signs delivered to other people. It also gives a feel of everything one needs in a conversation. Lastly, I am going to dive into the listening skills to try and understand them as well as to give you, the reader the basic ways to improve your listening at large.

Developing One's Communication Skills

As I mentioned before, their different communication skills. These skills help to improve communication if they are used properly. These skills are: listening, verbal and non-verbal skills. When these skills are not natured communication becomes very difficult. So, these skills are working progress every day to day life. Understanding these skills and their purpose is the most important starting point for working towards them. Researching also helps one to develop one's communication skills. This research should be about communication and how to go about it at large. Every person has a duty to learn these skills to keep the conversation between him or her with other people going. How can we improve these communication skills one might ask? I will discuss ways on how to nature and improve these communication skills.

How to Improve Listening Skills in Communication

Listening skills are important in every social institution that is: school, work or even marriage. They help one person to understand others. They are also key to solving problems since listening to someone's grievances is what makes someone to work on them. Communication is mainly about listening to others and also responding to them. When someone rarely listens, then most of the problems between him or her and others are rarely solved. Good listening skills, earn someone other people's trust and affection. Listening skills are also essential when someone gives a high-ranking job. This is because he or she has to listen to the grievances of other workers.

Characters of a Good Listener

First, they are compassionate. Without this trait, it is hard to listen to others. Empathy and compassion are key since a good listener.

This trait makes a person less self-centered and a little bit more selfless. With these, a person has a real knack for listening and solving problems. This trait makes someone perfect for being a senior at work, school or home. This means that these compassionate people make excellent leaders and they excel at it. Secondly, they are open-minded. That means that they are open to new ideas and also grievances. When someone, whether low ranking to them comes to them, they are willing to listen. They are aware that everyone has an idea and it may be relevant. They also believe that all people should have a say in matters. These are some of the reasons why most of them are activists fighting for other people's rights. This trait makes them great listeners and great problem solvers.

Another characteristic is that they are curious. This hunger for information. Most of the time this hunger is insatiable, meaning one needs more ideas. Thus, these people are always open to new and fresh ideas. They will always listen in order to quench their everyday thirst for knowledge. They believe listening gives them knowledge and knowledge is power. These traits make them very considerate which is good when one is listening to others.

They are also people who keep focus and are not easily distracted. For someone to listen to something or someone they have to be very attentive. A great listener is one that keeps focusing on the task of hearing people out. Keeping the focus on one thing is usually hard for many people, thus this is a quality with few people. If one possesses this quality then the person is actually a good listener and even better problem solver. Lastly, a good listener always asks questions. This helps the listener to understand and clarify the subject that he or she is listening to. A good listener is also a good academician thus he or she will ask questions then they will get answered. This makes them very understanding and also very clear with the subject at hand. Clarity is a great way to handle things as they should be.

Core Listening Skills

The core listening skills are those skills which comprise of the listening skills in communication. They are a few core listening skills in a conversation. First, is the body language which enables one to know someone's emotions, even without someone telling them in words? Another is the responses one gives to the questions

asked by others. One's responses to questions say so much about them. When someone answers questions skillfully and diligently it normally means they were attentive. Also, patience is another core skill. Without patience, one would not be able to keep listening to people. Listening requires this value for it to work well.

How Does Someone Improve Their Listening Skills?

First, one is by sitting upright when listening to people. This helps one to focus on the task at hand. Sitting upright and maintaining the right posture helps one not drift off when one is being spoken to. Another way is by keeping eye contact with the speaker this also allows someone not to drift off to other things. Also, people could try to picture what the speaker is saying. A visual always makes things easy to understand and really clear. Asking questions is also another way to make someone listen and be alert. Lastly, be keen and avoiding interrupting so that the message is clear and understandable.

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication Skills

Non-verbal skills are the signs and symbols used in communication. They include facial signs, body posture. They help in making communication easy and smooth. The emotions of a speaker to the recipient. Verbal skills are those that are spoken by the speaker to the recipient. Many people confuse verbal and writing skills, but the difference is very definite. Writing skills involve writing the words down to the recipient while verbal skills involve speaking the words to the recipient. This the easiest form of communication. It may also be the hardest when someone is shy. Shyness disrupts verbal communication to take place. Verbal skills are very important since they are the basis of written communication. One writes what they speak. If someone's speaking is good, then his or her writing will be good too. Verbal skills are learned over time in someone's life. This may be through the available social institutions like the school, church, and home and also at work. Verbal skills are very old it was First, made after man evolved from ape and he made organized societies. Languages are many or diverse thus they make verbal skills very unique.

The Pros of Verbal Communication

Verbal skills have their own upper hand; this means that it has several advantages. Verbal communication can be done by anyone

at any time. That means it is not picky and grounds to do it are not minimal or restricted. Verbal communication may reach a larger audience than other means. For example, talking on television or radio. The message is less likely to be misunderstood by anyone who was listening to the speaker keenly. It does not take up anyone's time. It, therefore, keeps time for the speaker if he or she is clear. Also, in verbal communication, there is room for questions and clarification. In verbal communication what was said in the past can be used in the future thus it is reliable. Verbal communication is also continuous which is good for someone who can speak their mind without worry that the recipient is not decoding the message. All these advantages are very relevant and they make verbal communication easy and good to be used by everyone.

The Cons of Verbal Communication

Everything with advantages must have its negative side, which is the disadvantages. Verbal communication may be disrupted by people who have different languages being talked to by someone who cannot speak their language. This makes verbal communication difficult to be accomplished. Also, verbal communication may not reach everyone who is required to be reached. This makes it difficult to convey any message. Verbal communication cannot be referred to in the future, thus unreliable to sort out future conflicts between two people or more. Verbal communication is not so clear since the speaker says what he or she is saying to finish and go eventually. This makes it difficult to look back and say this is what he or she said.

How Does Someone Improve Their Verbal and Non-Verbal Skills?

First, one should keep in contact with the people one is talking to. This for one to look trustworthy to the listener. Eye contact keeps a person talking since someone believes that the person is listening. Another way is by using the facial expression. The facial expression describes one's emotions more than words. Other ways include: keeping a good posture, also listening without interrupting the speaker and lastly, is being aware of one's tones at any given conversation. These two skills can be easily be improved since most of their solutions are more practical and things one can easily take

up into their own daily lives in terms of their daily activities. Working on these verbal and non-verbal cues makes someone better at understanding people when never they talk or whenever they are listening to us.

What Is the Basic Feel for a Conversation?

The feel of a conversation refers to the state of the conversation between the conversational and conversant the feel of a conversation is based on whom one is talking to. For example, the feel of a conversation at work is different than the one at home. Also, the feel of talking, for example to one's boss is different than when one is talking to a fellow workman. Conversations have different channels depending too on who is in the conversation. Some communications have long channels which others have short ones. Most of the long channels are the ones belonging to official business while shorter ones are more of the informal business. Feelings in a conversation are very relevant and important. The feel should be clear since it is the mood of the conversation.

Conversations at work are very serious and are very formal. Everyone is expected to use formal language, to wear formal or official wear and one is expected to follow the protocols for each and every single procedure depending on the organization. At home conversations are different this is because the conversations are very casual. At home, there are no protocols, but there may be rules. This does not involve what to wear but may have customs that happen in the home like who will do the chores.

Another set is at school. Conversations in schools are both formal and informal. This means that a student has to have both in the bag. When a student is talking to a teacher or lecturer, he or she has to be polite and formal. The student, while visiting the school offices must be officially dressed. This is the formal side of the school. When a student is talking to another student, he or she is not needed to be official. The student's relationship is playful and very unofficial or casual anyway you call it. Students stick together like a pack of wolves which shows unity and solidarity. Students being among themselves don't need to worry about being formal or even acting formally all together.

This sub-topic explains that communication may be formal or casual. It is easy to fit in a social institution once someone

understands the language used in this different situation. Conversation skills help us understand how to talk to others and keep a nice conversation with them. They also teach the basic way to be polite and nice while listening and talking to others. It also helps us to understand how a conversation works and how it makes everyone feel and how at the end of the day different social institutions have different feels of communication.

The conversation skills improvement methods are through fixing the methods that facilitate communication like fixing the writing, verbal and nonverbal skills. Once these skills are improved then and only then will the conversation goodness rate be increased. What is a conversation good rate one might ask this is the ability of someone to converse with others in a positive and vibrant rate? Many people are unable to make their conversations to be good since they may have hindering factors in their lives like fear pulling them back. A good conversation is made up of the right attitude, body postures, and facial expressions together with the right words which bring about a positive 100 percent good conversation. Conversations are not to be taken lightly. Words that come out of one's mouth should be checked since one is not talking to a lot, but a person and a person have feelings that are very important. Conversations are how we and others relate and when one makes one wrong move, then the whole thing blows up in one's face. To avoid this, one has to always be careful, especially when it comes to conversing with others. The more careful one is, the safer it is for them.

Chapter 19. Manage Shyness

Low self-esteem typically comes with anxiety disorders, and contributes to them. You might feel you're not as good as other people, or not worthy of anything positive that could come your way. The lack of confidence makes you fearful to enter new situations or engage with people, worsening anxiety and social phobias. CBT will help you with the anxiety, but it will also do you a lot of good to build up your self-confidence.

The way we talk to ourselves contributes significantly to how we see ourselves. Cognitive distortions will bring out the critic in your head, leading you to think things like "I'm not good enough," or "I'll never get this right." To get better, you need to change your self-talk. Evaluate it carefully, looking back through your journal if you need to.

Look at how you refer to yourself and what descriptive words you use. Now consider – would you say those things to a friend of yours? If a close friend made the exact same mistake as you when you called yourself stupid, would you call them the same name? Most likely not.

It's a difficult concept sometimes, but you get to be your own best friend. If you catch yourself thinking something negative about yourself, cheer yourself up just as you would a friend. Remind yourself of all the good in you, and how much progress you've made towards getting better.

Positive affirmations are a great way to improve your self-talk. These are phrases you can keep handy to talk yourself up when necessary. Get started by writing down all of your positive qualities. Be honest, and don't worry if you sound like you're bragging sometimes. Write everything, whether it's something general like your intelligence, or the specific way you handled a certain scenario.

Out of each quality you listed, come up with a simple phrase that you can have ready to go when you need it. It's easy to be hard on ourselves, but we need to remember our good qualities and use them to boost ourselves up.

There is something to be careful of when coming up with your

affirmations. Don't get too outrageous, or your brain won't believe them. It will reject them and cling on tighter to the distortion it has, convinced that you've given it proof of its truth. Having an affirmation like "I am deliriously happy every day and my life is perfect," is clearly untrue. Be more subtle, and focus on the progress you're currently making. "I am improving every day" is a much better affirmation, and it's true.

Besides being your own champion, there are things that you can do every day to gradually build up your confidence. As your anxiety improves, you'll find it easier to do more of everything. When you feel able to put yourself out there for new experiences, being more self-confident will in turn reduce your anxiety further. Read on for some easy ways to get started.

Practice Confident Body Language

A huge part of how humans communicate is body language. Typically, we unconsciously move based on our mental state. You can actually reverse this and use purposeful body language to influence your mind. A lot of socially anxious people have very telling body language – trying to take up as little space as possible, avoiding eye contact, speaking quickly and quietly, moving in ways that help them hide from the gaze of others.

You're going to purposefully adjust your body language to broadcast confidence. Not only does this come across to other people, it will also signal to your mind to behave in a way that matches your movements and posture. Confident movements actually lower cortisol in your body and increase good hormones like serotonin and dopamine.

To signal confidence, work on your posture for both sitting and standing. Keep your back straight and your shoulders back. Your chin should be parallel to the ground. If you've had poor posture, correcting it will be uncomfortable at first. Keep it up though, and it will soon feel natural. You'll probably have less aches and pains in your shoulder, neck, and back, and less headaches if you suffer from them.

Learning to remain still is a huge step in showing more confidence. Anxious people are always tense, and it comes through in the body language. They feel they need to move often, and have jerky movements from the muscle tension. Start to notice these little

movements you make. Simply being mindful of them can help you reduce them.

When you're standing, balance your weight between both of your legs and keep your feet about shoulder width apart. Refrain from tapping your toes or shuffling your feet. When sitting, keep yourself comfortably back in the chair rather than perched on the edge as if ready to jump up at any second. Keep your legs either apart or loosely crossed, however you're comfortable, but don't tap your feet or keep your legs tightly wrapped together.

Practice keeping your head still as well. Anxiety makes us actively seek out threats, but confident people can keep their gaze on a fixed point without worry. Fidgeting is another huge sign of anxiety. This might take a lot of work at first, but keeping your hands and fingers still will go a long way towards making you look and feel more confident.

Reduce the speed of your movements and speech. Anxiety quickens these things and it comes across to others. Walk at a slower pace with good-sized strides. Be mindful of your speech and choose your words before using them, then be sure to use a good speed rather than rushing. Add more pauses in your actions, rather than jumping from one thing to the next. Silence can also be your friend – it's okay to not be talking at every moment or breaking the quiet in some way, a thing anxious people often do.

Confident people have more open body language, while anxious ones are more closed off. Broadcast openness by exposing more of your body in subtle ways. Don't cross your arms or legs tightly. Lean back while sitting instead of scrunching forward. Imagine the difference in how you hold yourself in bitter cold and sweltering heat. Anxious body language fits well in cold weather, keeping limbs close and not moving too broadly to hold onto some warmth. Gradually move your body language into warmer territory – everything is more open and you keep your limbs farther away from your body.

Finally, work on being more direct in your body language. Maintain eye contact with people that you're interacting with. Smile often. Face the person you're communicating with and avoid looking around your environment. Think of the person you're with as a friend and ally, and let your movements towards them be open and

friendly.

Break Out of Your Comfort Zone

Take some time to list the things you fear most. Organize the list and rank the items from least to most anxiety inducing. Once you've done that, start facing the fears. Start on the easiest item for you to accomplish, and work your way up to the most difficult. When you start, you might feel like you'll never have the courage to confront your biggest fears. As you gradually work towards them, however, you'll find that you can do it.

Your fears can be absolutely anything, from calling to make a doctor's appointment to skydiving and anywhere in between. Don't take into consideration how other people might feel about the things that scare you. These are your own fears, and even if anxiety has created some that feel silly, they're very real to you.

No Mistakes, Only Learning Opportunities

A big component of anxiety is being afraid to make mistakes. That can hold us back significantly, keeping us from trying new things or taking calculated risks. Change the way that you look at mistakes. They are never failures – instead, they are learning opportunities. No matter what mistake you've made or what the outcome was, you can find something to learn from it. Because of this, you can view mistakes in a more positive light. Everyone makes mistakes, but not everyone learns from them. By seeing them as valuable lessons, you've changed mistakes into something positive.

Laugh at Yourself

A lot of people filter their humor, but socially anxious people even more so. Work on loosening up a bit. Having a sense of humor goes a long way towards making every day more positive, and making it easier to brush off mistakes and bad experiences. You might have noticed that a lot of confident people are also funny, and vice versa. They're not afraid to make jokes at their own expense and laugh at them.

This can be hard at first, especially if you've spent years beating yourself up and only noticing the bad things you've done. It can help to imagine that you're in a really cheesy sitcom – when you experience something less than desirable, think of how it would be portrayed for laughs in that sitcom. You'll soon find how fun and

ridiculous all of life can actually be.

Socialize

This is, of course, the big one for socially anxious people. You'll definitely need to work through your CBT before diving into new social situations. As you're able to calm your anxiety and find yourself less distressed at the thought of interacting with others, you can start to branch out and try new things. Just like any other skill you might learn, being social takes time and practice to be good at. So you need to do exactly that – practice.

Find some ways to get out more, like social events, hobby groups, or clubs. Choose ones that really speak to your interests, so that you feel comfortable in that regard. Start going to some of these, but as tempting as it might be, don't bring a friend. Going with a friend allows you to lean on them for support, or let them carry conversations and other interactions. It's much the same as trying to learn how to ride a bike but never taking off the training wheel. If you're feeling particularly anxious, you can bring a friend to some things at first, but your goal is to go alone and meet new people.

Don't go into social interactions with a goal for their outcome. Simply be with the other people. Make small talk or chat about your hobbies, but don't hold any expectations for what may come after. If you enter every social situation with the set goal of making a friend, finding a date, or getting approval from someone, you're only placing more stress on the situation than there needs to be, and you'll be disappointed if you don't get the desired result. Instead, view every interaction as practice, and congratulate yourself for doing it. If something more comes from the conversation, great, that's an added bonus.

When you get home from a new social situation, take some time to reflect on it. Get out your journal and write about it. At the very least, write down what the event was, when you attended it, and a couple of reactions or emotions you experienced. Keep this up for a while. You don't need to record every single social outing, but try to do so with ones that you had a somewhat strong reaction to. As you improve, you can look back at the older events and see how much your thoughts on the situations have changed.

Once you've overcome some of your anxiety fears, try your hand at making your own plans. Invite your friends over for a board game

night, or to go to dinner at your favorite restaurant. Ask a small group of people to go to a baseball game with you. Think of what activities and outings you enjoy, and then ask people to join you. It's intimidating at first.

Social anxiety probably stopped you from asking anyone for anything in the past. It could have come from a fear of rejection, or the sense that you'd be bothering people by doing so. However, those are false beliefs you're well on your way to overcoming. Plan your own social activities and invite whoever you'd like.

Here are some journaling prompts to answer that will help you build your self-esteem.

- List everything that you like about yourself, big and small.
- What are your strengths?
- What type of situations do you excel in?
- What good qualities do you think others notice about you?
- Think of some recent compliments that you've received.
- Make a list of things that make you happy, no matter how little.
- What gets you excited?
- What are some positive events in your life that still have an effect on you today?
- What makes you unique?
- In what ways do I give to others?
- What would my life look like if I had 100% self-confidence?
- If I had no limits, what would I do with my life?

Chapter 20. Making Friends

First Understand What Friendship is

There are statements that love is blind and friendship is about a person being carried away by another person through acquaintance to levels where there is simply no notice. Friends can be of different kinds; some who come in the form of allies who team up with you on either all occasions or in certain activities. Some friendships can be in the form of sympathizers who feel you deserve the best and can do anything to help you get what is your lot in life. These ones feel for you when you suffer. Others are also supporters and encouragers who motivate you in life and your various efforts in life.

When someone is a friend to you, there are honest exchanges that happen between you. You do not hold back as you have a propensity to make them aware of things about you that others do not come to know of. When you have anything sensitive, you know there is that one person that has to know about it all. This is even when the information is confidential and sensitive, and you trust that they will take it without evoking attitudes or repulsion against you for it.

When one has a friend that accompanies them in their various sprees, they start to have a life of fulfillment. They feel enriched and are bound to happier knowing there is someone holding them down. This is particularly if the friend shares the interests that you hold and could relate to your experiences. These in popular culture have come to term each other as “partner in crime.”

The Process of Being Friends Is Not Always Easy

When deciding to make friends one has to understand what it takes. Usually, you are different people coming from different backgrounds. The give-and-take that it calls for needs someone who has mastered some skills of engagement and interpersonal competencies. This is bearing in mind that everyone has aspects about them that make us different.

We do not think the same or behave the same. Some of the things that interest us may not typically similar even when some can be common. There is always something different that the other person

has. To imagine that making friends should be a process filled with fun is a lie. This is because friendship involves honest feedback and accountability to one another. Remember how much you are going to confide in the person and you can know how the process should be taken up.

One has to dedicate efforts and display a commitment to be tolerant knowing that they also need to be tolerated. A lot of people usually want to make friends and get close to certain people that they can ally with. However, careers and family obligations usually rob them of the concentration as they naturally are a priority, higher than certain friendship pursuits.

How to Start Building up Trust

Friendship is not a one-sided experience as it requires mutual understanding and tolerance. Both of the people involved have to show equal effort and enthusiasm towards each other. However, the difficult part is getting over fears and reservations that people can hold against each other. Trust is triggered when people start to expose themselves and to reveal more of themselves to others.

This is about becoming real with one another and shading off the facades and masks that could be veiling the core of your being. This means that friendship is built by making the other person realize that you have some reliance on them for certain things in life. Start opening up to one another should deliberate and measured.

This is because one has to be sure that the other person cares that you are starting a process of creating interdependence. If you disclose in a manner that is not measured, one can overwhelm the other person and scare them away. This means that disclose yourself why monitoring the extent that the other person is also reciprocating by unbundling themselves to you. It is better to ensure that what you are trading among you are balanced in order to ensure that both of you are playing a part to alleviate reservations held.

It may take a while before both of you can start to believe in each other's truthfulness. When you have plans, it is essential that each one of you shows reliability as lack of it only impedes the development of trust. When someone trusts you with sensitive information, do not be disloyal or breach the confidence. The problem with a trust that is breached is that it quickly brings down

a friendship that has taken time and effort to build. Do not violate the trust that someone vests in you by sharing sensitive information with you.

If You Friend-Hunting, A Fun Place Is Where You Go

When looking to create contacts, one has many places to choose from that serve as good catchments for interactions. However, certain places can serve better to offer an environment for people to familiarize than others. Some of the best places are where people let themselves out knowing that they are surrounded by people that they are not suspicious of. These are the best places as the special someone you want to connect with is more relaxed and your anxieties can better be controlled.

Some of the places that one could consider as the best could be parties, weddings, political rallies and even classes for adults where people feel they share certain interests. Finding that you just found people who have similar characteristics as yourself is a clear indication that you are on course. There is lesser strangeness, reduces your niche when looking for characteristics and hence you can target better without being wrong about your guess.

If you are a photographer, for instance, visiting scenic sights can most likely make you encounter people who love photography. You will find that at least the person you zero down to will have a certain interest that relates to your photography too. This can be traveling and going on vacations among such things. They then enrich or even diversify your interests. It is even easier to get started now that you can establish a common ground pretty easily.

Ask the person what is exciting them about this place and be fascinated about it. If they are willing, ask them to take you around to the areas they feel are interesting. Project interest in that by then taking photos of them and you could even take pictures of them. Assuming you later take contacts of the person, you have somewhere to start. Send the pictures you took to them. Say something nice to them and let them find a need to be in your company the next time they are visiting sceneries.

However, do not be focused only on identifying your niche as this can encourage the development of stereotypes. Sometimes thinking that someone who shares everything in common with you can make you lock out some of the most interesting people in your life while

mapping out your niche. One should also hence think of friendship as something that can start anywhere. One only needs to be aware of the environment around them. The neighbor that does not pass you without a greeting, the people that get off the treadmill before you embark, the stranger that you just showed direction. Possibilities of friendship are around us all the time and we only have to get out and notice them.

Introducing Yourself

Sometimes people are ambiguous when they are interacting about whether they would like to know your name. There are some who act as if they do not care about who you are. Sometimes they are only pretending about it. This is especially the case with making friends with a lady. They can be quite cold and appear disassociated with you which also sends chills in you. You may wonder how to approach the introductory part.

Failing to figure this out quickly may make you progress into a conversation without knowing her name. For her, she holds it against you if you fail to find a plan to introduce yourselves. The best way to pass this taste is to pounce on any small pause in the early stages of the communication and tell her who you are. For instance, when she is expecting you to say something, start by saying you want to do an introduction before you follow it up with your point.

This can make you create an introductory period when she is also forced to introduce her. You get her quite fixed and she is compelled inwardly to do introduction however obscure and inconclusive. When you introduce yourself earlier and she does the same, she is more likely to settle in the conversation. Women hardly settle when you have not created an introductory period, she is probably thinking about that fail the whole time that you are talking to her. When the introduction comes too late, it will not be on time to have the effect it can have if it came a bit earlier.

Demonstrate a Liking and Fondness

You have to be clear about how you find a person. If you think they are scintillating, express it and be expressive enough as for the other person to know your advances. When you feel enthralled by someone, make the step to approach them and let them know. If they are not already interacting with you, seek them out and

initiate a chat with them. This is by exercising your friendliness that helps you to be good at expressing it even to those that you have to seek out for.

There are people who have a good personality and have open attitudes but they do not let those whom they like to experience them. When you are sweet, it is for those whom you like to enjoy your sweetness. Be good, not just by holding that nature but at looking for avenues to exercise that nature. If you do not have friendliness in your nature, start purposing to be better in your attitude when you find that you have a liking for someone.

In having to show a liking for others, it also massages them in the right places. It makes them feel good and appreciated. In return, it triggers their friendliness too and they start unleashing it to you too. You can be surprised that they are even better at that than you and some takeover and keep the process of making friendship going. This should not mean that you also approach someone with aggressive signals of friendliness as it may trigger their defenses and sensitivities. They begin to analyze you and this impacts on their ability to respond to you well. Do not appear forceful and aggressive. Be casual and handle it all with ease and patience. You only need to trigger sometimes and let things erupt by themselves. The person may warm up to you himself and create a way to become friends.

How to Go Out – Talk Over a Drink?

When you have had an opportunity to familiarize yourself with someone and you find you wish to take it farther in order to get acquainted with them you can also ask the out. Explain to them clearly what your proposal is and do not make them feel suspicious. Come across as someone who does not have any hidden motives in order for them to give it a shot. Surprises at an early stage are discouraged and keep the person filled in on what you are suggesting. Remember you are creating friendship and this has to appear like it is leading to just that. If it is the person of another sex, it is good to be clear about what you mean.

What you suggest for the out should be based on their taste and preference. Your only interest is to keep the objective in focus. It is a good way of expressing your interest and convey the message that you have developed a liking for the person. It is also a suggestion

that you have grown fond of them such that you ant time to spend with them. Be mindful that you are after making friends and so you should not be hell-bent on deciding things about it. She may have someone to answer to such as a fiancé or other responsibilities which she has to mind.

Pose a question that makes her think and feel the call is al in their hands. For instance, ask “does tonight sound convenient?” If they are not occupied, they can reply “sure.” Otherwise, just ask them the convenient day when they feel this could be arranged. Asking someone out for a meal, drink or a snack should not arouse too much suspicion also. This is given that people have to eat at least in eth day and sometimes, they also may be badly in need of a company to eat with.

In fact, try to find out if the person is fussy about food which may be their hot button. There are people who would love any suggestion that involves meals and snacks. Any suggestion involving food is a good suggestion. These ones are ready and waiting and perhaps, not many people have paid attention to them to realize this attribute about them. You do not need to struggle, you just have to hint at issues concerning food. For instance, you could say you are frustrated about looking for joints that prepare pork chops that are priceless. She will be smoking with ideas about that.

Act like you are looking over at something on the phone and mention that the pizza at a certain restaurant has been popularized much. You say you may want to try it, she may comment about it in a way that will give you a leeway to invite her along. Sometimes, it is about getting psychological with these things. You could get around them by means of the attributes, appetites, and interest that someone has. This, however, works for someone that you have known a lot better to be able to set them up into certain traps and they have no awareness of it.

Usually, someone that has also been waiting for some opportunity to interact with you will be ready and willing. You only needed to find a way to ask. Once you find a way to ask you have broken the ice and it is all upon you to ensure that the environment on the occasion does not roll back the gains made.

Starting to do things Together

The things that people together are mostly those that both persons

have an interest in. This is the reason why finding out what the other person's interest is can be pivotal. You identify an activity that you believe both of you will enjoy as it is a mutual interest. Whatever the activity; movie night, skiing spree, swimming; one should be sure it is fun and helps the other person realize you are an ally.

The way to propose it is by simply having to use the information in your inventory about what the other person is said. Allude to this when proposing the activity in order to found it on something concrete. This helps to reduce resistance and soften the other person. They will be flattered you remembered about that and will feel you are prioritizing to interest them through this activity. It renders the person defenseless and sometimes you realize they were ready for that a long time ago. Successfully asking someone out and delivering the fun that was based on a mutual interest will mean that friendship is underway. Do not be surprised that the other person will be asking when the same will be done again.

Be Sure To Keep In Touch

You have worked so hard, dedicated efforts and time and sacrificed in order to initiate friendship. It is important to keep it rolling forwards building on the gains made to enshrine it on stone. You do not retreat and watch what you have achieved fade away. The efforts of maintaining contact are to ensure the friendship that has been formed grows. This makes the two of you fonder and connected. You establish a communication culture and routine which someone gets accustomed to.

Both of you start to feel the need to keep the culture. One starts to feel discomfort when communication is halted. In the course of communication, share ideas and start confiding in the person in order to make them realize that they matter. Let them know they can serve a purpose in this arrangement. They will be drawn to also do the same and this is a solid achievement as the friendship marks an actualization milestone for the friendship.

One thing you should never do is when after you asked someone to go out with you, they found time for you. When they ask you to accompany them on a certain activity you will kill progress if you do not make it. When they ask you to join them, make all attempts not to fail them. This is about cultivating reliability and it is also

concretizing the feeling of friendship that is developing in the other person. They are also starting to create forums to share with you and is a suggestion that they are growing fonder of you. Do not make them question their perception of you and how they have warmed towards you as this will make them start withdrawing. Saying that you are not in the mood for something she suggests, you come across as self-seeking and only care that other people join you when you are not willing to do the same.

Chapter 21. Meditations to Boost Self-Worth

Fearlessness is one of those side-effects of reflection that few individuals converse. However, this sort of self-assurance can have a significant effect on a meditator's life. Schools that have actualized reflection projects have seen this in their children. Experienced meditators have discovered that reflection can enable them to assemble certainty both at work and at home—just as a profound, overrunning feeling of fearlessness that leads to independence in the content.

When you are genuinely fearless, you are adaptable concerning the sense of self: you can get inner self when vital. However, you can likewise abandon it is fundamental to get the hang of something new through tuning in. Also, if you find that you cannot lower your ego, at any rate, you realize this is so. You can let it be known to yourself. On the off chance that you take significant fearlessness to be unassuming enough to perceive your very own confinements without self-fault, you will realize low self-esteem.

Self-Assurance is not the absence of confinements. It is comprehension and acknowledgment of those constraints while having that understanding increment as opposed to decreasing your self-esteem. Your shortcomings become quality. They become a piece of you that you can employ, as opposed to a part of you that you abstain from exploiting. That is self-confidence.

How Does Meditation Build Self-Confidence?

Meditation might sound contemporary; however, in reality, it is an old training which has since been consolidated by numerous individuals of the significant world religions. Reflection is a method for picking up clarity, center, and quiet. In figuring out how to reflect, you will become familiar with a great deal about your examples of an idea, and in contemplation, you are allowed the chance to improve these examples.

Meditation instructs us to encounter our contemplations as merely that and to value our thoughts. They are not reality or the system for sentiments about ourselves. For instance, if one every now and again supposes, "I'm useless," contemplation instructs us to expel ourselves from that idea. Rather than guessing, "I'm useless," one figures out how to watch the inclination, "There's that uselessness

feeling once more." When we gain proficiency with this objectivity of our emotions, it is conceivable to release them. Such a situation makes meditation so significant.

Absolute fearlessness must be based on the establishment of mindfulness. This sort of mindfulness gives you a chance to comprehend your qualities and your shortcomings on a profound and close level.

A center focus in contemplation is to see without judgment. You are not abstaining from anything, nor are you attempting to get anything going. You are primarily witnessing what is. The situation is a standout amongst the ideal ways for peering into the inward operations of the human personality. A great deal of our oblivious mental and enthusiastic propensities remains oblivious because they are hard to find in our frenzied everyday lives. It is just when we plunk down, be still, and watch ourselves in this non-judgmental way that we can begin to unravel our identity.

Ultimately, this will prompt a superior comprehension of your qualities and constraints. What is more, through the act of non-judgmental perception, you will also condition your consciousness never again to judge those impediments. Instead, you will begin to acknowledge them, and in the long run, have the option to utilize those impediments as qualities. Genuine comprehension of your difficulties and conditions at that point turns into a comfortable and modestly incredible fearlessness. That is how meditation can help fabricate fearlessness. Shockingly, a standout amongst the ideal approaches to generate fearlessness isn't to concentrate on certainty, however on mindfulness. Reflection encourages mindfulness.

Do I truly make a difference?

It is a typical probe that frequently emerges in our brains, particularly when we feel dismissed or despondent. It is fundamental to think that other individuals brush you aside; either as a result of your looks, instruction, where you live, where you work and so forth. They can make you feel disgraceful and even make you begin scrutinizing your very presence.

In any case, do you realize that numerous individuals are so busy with themselves that they cannot try and consider another person's issues? Each has a ton of things in their brains that they probably would not have room schedule-wise to find your very own

uncertainties. All the while, we may decipher their very own activities or inaction to be coordinated towards us. It happens mainly when we enable other individuals to characterize our identity.

Where it counts in every single one of us is a feeling of insufficiency in one method for another. We have sentiments of not fitting in a specific class, gathering, group, and so on. That is the reason millions go to class. They look for instruction to have a superior comprehension of their environment, to all the more likely get by in this horrendous world.

Numerous individuals probably would not take you seriously until you accomplish something that either lifts them or bothers their region. When you rapidly judge yourself to be shameful individuals around, you may detect it, and they can begin treating you that way. It is us who inform other individuals concerning ourselves either by our own words or by activity and dependent on that, they respond in a way to suit what we depict.

Throughout everyday life, I have met individuals with loads of self-esteem. Individuals who have confidence in themselves and in what they are doing. Individuals who radiate certainty amid emergencies. I have met individuals who make you feel great in their quality, and you will dependably need to be in their essence.

Then again, some individuals are repulsive. They feel too high about themselves and perceive others as nonentities in society.

Have you at any point thought of which sort of individual you are? We, as a whole need to like ourselves. Indeed, even the disgusting individual wants oneself! I realize we can be depicted distinctively by various individuals. In any case, somewhere inside, we know our identity. We recognize our quality zones, what we know well, and what other individuals perceive regardless of whether it is only one individual like us. We also know our weaknesses and try as much as possible not to make mistakes that can lessen our worth.

Today, dive deep inside yourself and reveal your self-esteem. Try not to acknowledge to choke under substantial heaps of other individuals' portrayals or discernment. Look inside the mirror; love and comprehend the individual glancing back at you. Try not too modest away. That is the thing that you are and is actually what other individuals see. Acknowledge yourself as you seem to be.

Grin, wink, and respect who you see glancing back at you inside the mirror. Other individuals have adequately acknowledged what they see and what they see is you-not another person. Nobody will allocate you value since you are essential.

Give your soul a chance to sparkle and let the light stream out of your eyes and to the general population around you. Expel the infabricated squares, for example, outrage, the soul of whining, grief, and self-indulgence that regularly can drag us back. Glance around and see exactly how things are so efficient. Life is moving forward and sticking to one issue does not help but lowers self-esteem. Have a conversation with anyone or anything. Nature will talk back to you, and it will guarantee you that everything is excellent. You are honestly important.

What Can Meditation Give You?

Envision that you become anxious after drinking a cup of coffee. Your heart begins dashing, and you have sentiments of fear. Utilizing reflection, you can learn not to move toward becoming overwhelmed by the temporary elevated and restless state brought about by the coffee, or by whatever else so far as that is concerned. Reflection shows us how to stay responsible for our feelings.

When somebody has low self-esteem, their inward voice is regularly censuring them. One gets a great deal of consideration, and even if it is in a negative sense. Through the standard routine with regards to contemplation, we can figure out how to treat our brain with more empathy.

Meditation Has Many Forms

Meditation does not mean sitting still for extended periods. There are various sorts of contemplation — many sorts of reflection centers on multiple things. For instance, in mantra meditation, you would concentrate on a picture, word, or mantra to calm the mind. In a free or yoga meditation, the attention is on your development. Kendo, swimming, cycling, and the hand to hand fighting can be utilized as moving reflections.

Guided symbolism reflections utilize a chronicle or pioneer instructing you and are a decent beginning spot for newcomers to meditation. There are many pre-recorded reflections accessible which are extremely clear to use.

A progressively common type of reflection includes setting aside

effort for yourself peacefully.

Set the Mood

Whichever sort of meditation you pick, there are a couple of things you can do which will make you stick with the way toward learning. Consider it to be expertise which you are obtaining, not something that can be mastered in a couple of days. Set a timetable for reflection with the goal that it turns into a standard piece of your life. Enable yourself to loosen up your body before you start. Extend, take full breaths, and light a flame. Make a feeling free from the diversion.

Give Yourself Time

When beginning a meditation practice, it is entirely expected to feel experience sentiments of stress and dissatisfaction. Contemplation can be troublesome first and foremost, as it takes a great deal of mental vitality to change your perspective and enable yourself to center. Do not allow yourself to end up irritated by the procedure. With standard practice, you will receive the rewards.

The most effective method to Meditate

Whenever you have an extra moment, close your eyes. Give yourself a couple of moments to focus on the rhythm of your breath. At that point, attempt to pace your breathes in and breathes out: breathe in for four seconds, stop for four seconds, breathe out for four seconds, delay for four seconds, and rehash. Concentrate on the sentiment of your breath entering and leaving your body, the impression of your feet on the floor, and loosening up any strain or grasping in your muscles.

Well done! You figured out how to meditate.

Why meditate? You might contemplate on what the advantages of such a straightforward movement could be. Having the option to loosen up your body and psyche for a couple of minutes daily can reduce the level of anxiety. Contemplation can help with fighting manifestations of tension and melancholy. Reflection can likewise improve your confidence through solace with contemplations and acknowledgment of self. Here are a couple of ways thinking may improve your self-esteem:

Reflection prevents negative considerations. Contemplation does not mean controlling your deliberations, yet it decreases the control your thoughts may have over you. For instance, having bunches of

antagonistic reflections about your appearance, your capabilities, and your incentive as an individual, what others consider you, and so on can add to low self-esteem.

These recollections can make you feel terrible about yourself. In any case, when you attempt to close out these reveries or contend against them, you are giving them additional time and vitality, which enables them to become more grounded. Through reflection, you can discover that simply watching these considerations and tolerating that they're there debilitates them. What's more, when these musings have less of an enthusiastic hold over you, they will probably begin happening less as often as possible as well. Access Mindful for more data about how this functions.

Meditation aids an individual in realizing that his or her thought has no definite impact on him or her. Figuring something does not make it genuine. Reflections are regularly reflexes, only mental events that occur because of boosts. So, in the fact that you have negative contemplations about yourself and your capacities that does not imply that you are any less equipped for beneficial. Reflection trains you to perceive these thoughts for what they are: simply contemplations. Not substances or realities.

Contemplation enables you to feel like you are sufficient. One of the elusive advantages of reflection is the capacity to feel present at the time when you are contemplating. When you choose not to move on or stress over the future, sentiments of self-uncertainty and deficiency can sneak in. However, when you are completely present, you can feel that being and breathing are sufficient at that time. You can guarantee yourself that you are actually where you should be. You may turn out to be progressively agreeable in your body and the space that you possess. These little exercises obtained during the time spent reflecting may begin to influence how you feel the remainder of the day, as well.

Perhaps you feel anxious or hesitant about starting to ponder. That may be because you have heard one of the regular misinterpretations about reflection. These misinterpretations include:

Meditation requires long stretches of sitting still. Numerous individuals picture meditation as sitting on a pad splendidly still for quite a long time at any given moment.

Individuals are either usually "great at the reflection," or not. It is essentially false. Everybody needs the practice to improve at contemplation. While a few people may have a simpler time centering than others, winding recollections are a typical piece of reflection and not a sign that you are "awful at it."

Contemplation is tied in with controlling your brain. It is frequently thought of as a device with which individuals control their minds and reflections. Nevertheless, the inverse is, in reality, obvious. The thought is tied in with recognizing that you cannot completely control your observations and tolerating your mind how it is. The consequence of this acknowledgment is that harmful, and on edge, contemplations have less power.

If you put less vitality toward attempting to stifle or battle against these considerations, and instead watch them or let them be, their authority over how you feel lessens. In the long run, you may figure out how to have the option to relinquish undesirable considerations, similar to a leaf coasting down a stream

There are numerous explanations behind low self-esteem. The majority of them originate from a youth of physical, or psychological mistreatment, or even deserting. If you experienced this kind of childhood, low confidence is nearly ensured because you failed to get the approval and bolster you required from grown-ups while growing up. You have likely dependably felt that you were not exactly in the same class as other individuals. Care contemplation can enable you to defeat low confidence and understand your maximum capacity.

Chapter 22. Mindfulness Strategies to Overcome Anxiety

Mindfulness becomes much easier when you gain a deeper understanding of your own thought processes. This can be achieved by broadening your knowledge and experiences on how the mind works, in general.

Through the years, mental health experts have been able to research on and collect a vast body of knowledge about the thought patterns of socially-anxious people. In their studies, they were able to pinpoint the common reasons behind anxiety-triggered thoughts and behavior.

For instance, if you believe the other people at the party will judge you for not being financially stable or wearing nice, expensive clothes, then it is only natural for you to feel anxious.

Most of the time, however, our thoughts and beliefs about what would happen in any situation, are not based on reality. We actually tend to exaggerate them with our negative thought patterns, even though we know that nothing good will really come of it.

If you are having trouble identifying your own negative thought patterns that have been triggering your social anxiety, then you can apply the following mindfulness strategy to bring them forth. You can use either a pen and paper or a sound recorder to take note of your responses to the following self-reflective questions. After this, you can then read or listen to your answers to learn more about how your mind works during times when you feel socially anxious.

Here are the steps to follow:

Step 1: Find a quiet, secure, and comfortable place where you can spend some time alone without anyone to disturb you. Once you are there, find a nice spot where you can write or record your thoughts into words.

Step 2: Begin by thinking of a social situation that causes you to feel anxious. If you wish, you may close your eyes and visualize in your mind all the different elements of that situation, from the sights, the sounds, the smells, and the overall atmosphere.

Step 3: As you begin to feel the familiar, albeit milder, physical and emotional symptoms of anxiety as provoked by the vision, notice how you react to the situation. Become fully aware of each symptom that transpires. Do not attempt to judge or think too much about the symptoms, but simply acknowledge them.

For instance, if you notice your heart beating faster, say, “my heart is beating faster right now.”

After acknowledging all of the symptoms, you may choose to take note of them before you move on to the next step.

Step 4: Now, ask yourself, “What is it about this social situation that scares me?” Acknowledge every single thought inside your mind in response to this question. You may say it out loud into your recorder or write it down on your sheet of paper.

Step 5: Move on to the next question, which is, “What might the other person or people in the situation be thinking about me?” Again, record your reaction.

Step 6: Ask yourself, “Is it so important for the other person or people to think of me in a positive way? Why is it so important?” Take note of your response.

Step 7: Ask yourself, “How will I behave or react in this given situation? Will I avoid it or not? Why is this my reaction?” After that, ask yourself, “What are my expectations of this social situation? Why do I think this negative thing will happen?” Record all your answers.

Step 8: Consider the situation wherein your negative expectations of the social situation would take place. Then, ask yourself, “What will I do if what I expect to happen in the social situation actually does happen? What will happen next after that?” Take note of your response to these questions as well as any other beliefs or thoughts that are aggravating your anxiety.

After doing this exercise, allow yourself some time to relax first and enjoy the things you take comfort in before you review your answers. This will refresh you and help you approach your responses in a more objective and mindful way.

Be careful not to criticize your responses or reflect on whether they are exaggerated or not as you read or listen to them. Rather, they are there simply to help you become more aware of your own

thoughts and feelings, particularly those related to your social anxiety. It is also important to remember that you are much more than these anxious thoughts and feelings, and that you can always change if you so choose.

Becoming Aware of your Anxiety

Triggered Behavior Anxiety is usually followed by the desire to act upon it in order to reduce its intensity. While there are hundreds, if not thousands, of possibilities as to how you would behave in reaction to social anxiety, mental health experts have identified three common types of anxiety-triggered behaviors, which are discussed below.

Perhaps after reading through each type, you might want to also reflect on whether you can relate to one or more of them. Therefore, you will probably want to have a pen and paper ready to take note of your thoughts.

Avoidance

The most common behavioral response to social anxiety is to avoid the situation. Avoiding the social situation may give you instant relief, but it will never remove your anxiety.

Here are some common examples of avoidance:

- When the phone is ringing and you muffle it with a pillow or put it on silent mode after it stops
- When you turn down offers to do an interview or present a report
- When you make up excuses to avoid attending a social event
- When you purposefully choose a different, albeit less convenient, route to a destination to avoid a certain person or group of people

Have you ever avoided certain social situations before due to your anxiety? Browse through your notes (especially the ones from and think of other situations that you have avoided in the past as well as your reasons for doing so.

Constant Reassurance Seeking

A strong desire to appear in a certain way to other people is common among many of those with social anxiety. Therefore, they constantly seek reassurance to ensure that they still have these qualities.

Some examples of constant reassurance seeking are described below:

- When you ask your friend or partner if you are fat, unattractive, and so on
- When you constantly check the mirror to make sure that your hair, outfit, clothes, etc., are perfect
- When you post too many pictures of yourself online and then check if anyone approves of them (such as how many “likes” it gets on Facebook, etc.)

While there is nothing wrong with seeking reassurance every now and then, the confidence of socially-anxious people in a given situation relies too much on it. The problem lies in their belief that something is wrong with them if they do not have such qualities. It also negatively supports anxiety-provoking thoughts such as worrying about how other people see them or think about them.

Moreover, their peers and family might grow exhausted from having to reassure them constantly, especially since they are being compelled to make judgments.

It can be difficult to detect whether you seek constant reassurance, especially if you have been unaware of it. However, you can start to become more mindful of your thought patterns so that you can watch for any signs of this defense mechanism for social anxiety. You can also reflect on certain situations wherein you resorted to this tactic and then try to consider your underlying reasons for doing so.

Overcompensation

When a person with social anxiety believes he or she has certain flaws, he or she would find a way to overcompensate in order to hide them, even though most of the time these flaws are purely perceived by their imagination.

Take a look at the following situational examples of overcompensation:

- Over-preparing for a report or presentation, such as by memorizing word-for-word even though it is not necessary
- Rehearsing what to ask and how to respond to a future conversation with a date or friend
- Trying so hard to be entertaining, charming, etc., even though you feel uncomfortable and unnatural doing so because you fear people would think you are boring
- Putting on too much makeup, wearing flashy clothes, etc., to hide a physical feature you are insecure about

Just like the constant reassurance seeking defense mechanism, overcompensation can be hard to detect especially if you have convinced yourself that such behavior is simply a part of your identity. However, by paying attention to how you really feel and what you truly think about these behaviors, you can overcome your insecurities and become truly confident in yourself.

Now that you have a better understanding of how your mind works, the next step is for you to create a series of steps towards mindfully responding—rather than merely reacting—to your social anxiety.

While no one can truly predict or control the kinds of thoughts that pop up in our heads, we do have the power to question them and interpret them. By interpreting your anxious thoughts in a curious, compassionate, and open way, you can reprogram your flight or fight response towards a given social situation.

Mindfulness Techniques to Enhance Self-Esteem in Social Situations

We all experience having low self-esteem every now and then, but in people with social anxiety, it is experienced almost every day. It becomes especially low during moments when they are about to face the social situation which they fear the most.

It can be comforting to simply avoid these social situations, but the healing process only starts when one mindfully reflects on the underlying cause. Why do these social situations cause you anxiety? How can you regain your self-esteem now that you know of these triggers?

You alone will be able to answer these questions. To help you

discover them, you can use the following mindfulness techniques as your guide: Become Mindful of your Reactions Mindfulness is about enjoying the present moment in an open, non-judgmental way. However, mindfulness can also be interpreted as remembering things in a compassionate and curious way. Looking into how you reacted to given social situations in the past can help you find out why they caused you to feel stressed and scared. Then, you can use these discoveries to help you regain self-esteem and overcome your social anxiety bit by bit.

Here are the steps to do this:

Step 1: Find a quiet, comfortable place where you can sit and write down your thoughts for a while. Bring a pen and paper with you.

Step 2: As you sit with pen and paper in hand, close your eyes and focus on your breath for a few minutes. Let your mind be filled with nothing but thoughts of the sensations you feel as you breathe.

Step 3: When you are ready, try to call to memory a time when you felt unconfident during a social situation. Allow your mind to picture out the details as vividly as you can, including your reaction to the situation. After that, slowly open your eyes and write down the details on the sheet of paper.

Here is an example: Last Monday, my old high school classmate invited me to a lunch gathering with our other classmates. At first, I could not say no, but I was able to find an excuse and so I told her that I could not make it. I was so relieved afterwards.

Step 4: Describe the sensations and emotions you felt for not being confident in that social situation. Try to recall the thoughts that crossed your mind during that time. Then, write down everything you can remember.

For example: I pretended to smile when she told me to attend the gathering. However, deep inside I was already thinking about how nice she still looks while I'm starting to get heavy around the edges. I had seen on Facebook how amazing her little family is and how they always travel during the summers. It makes me feel bad and I worry that my other classmates might ask me about my life during the gathering. I remember my heart racing and my head pounding at the thought... so, I had to say no.

After this short exercise, give yourself some time to breathe and

relax before you read through your notes. Be mindful, compassionate, and non-judgmental towards yourself as you read, because what you wrote is raw and honest, and serves as groundwork for your progress.

Recognize and Let Go of Assumptions

Incorrect assumptions can eat away your self-esteem quickly unless you catch them as they come to mind. However, it is difficult to step out of your assumptions once they are there, so the better way is to equip yourself with the knowledge and mindfulness to prevent them or counteract them in a healthy way. Socially-anxious people make five main types of assumptions, namely Overestimation, Personalization, Catastrophizing, Mind Reading, and Black and White Mentality. Read through each type and then reflect as to whether your anxious thoughts fall under any of them.

Overestimation is when you make an assumption that something is highly likely to happen, or that what you think the other person is thinking is most likely true.

For instance, someone who is scared of meeting new people might assume that in the next acquaintance party he or she is going to make a bad impression. Another example is when a socially-anxious person who does not think he or she is attractive enough would assume that the people at the party would find him or her to be unattractive.

Here are example statements of Overestimation:

- Now that my partner has left me, I am certainly going to die alone and depressed.
- My family thinks I am a disappointment.
- My friend only feels sorry for me because I could not find a good job.

Personalization

This type of assumption is when you take a negative situation personally, in that you believe it to be your fault when in fact, there are plenty of other factors that contribute to it.

For instance, if you see some people fall asleep during your speech, you would immediately assume that you are not a good speaker.

However, it is also possible that the topic was just not something the audience could relate to, or that it was the time of the day when people are generally sleepy, or that there are still people who are listening intently to you. Unless you become mindful that you are personalizing the incident, you could end up avoiding similar social situations in the future.

Here are examples of Personalization statements:

- After talking for only a few minutes, my new co-worker excused herself from the conversation. I guess that makes me a pretty boring conversationalist.
- My seatmate looks agitated. She must be really mad at me for sitting next to her.
- That guy across the room is staring at me. He must be disgusted by my outfit right now.

Catastrophizing

This is the assumption that something terrible is about to happen to a social situation. While we all do experience unfortunate incidents in social situations from time to time, such as embarrassing ourselves in front of others or committing some sort of social faux pas, some of us can just shrug it off and not keep the memory of it from allowing us to have a good time with others.

In many socially-anxious people, however, this thought is often generalized, so much so that they think it will happen in all future social situations.

Here are some example statements of Catastrophizing:

- It would be a catastrophe if I sing off-key on stage.
- I cannot imagine how terrible it would be if they see how bad my skin is at the reunion.
- I will only make a fool of myself if I volunteer, I am sure of it!

Black and White Mentality

This type of assumption is when a person judges anything as either perfect or unacceptable. A socially-anxious person would consider him or herself to either be perfect or face the consequences of rejection. It is for this reason that many perfectionists avoid social

situations in which they might be judged for their “flaws.”

In addition, socially-anxious people tend to use should statements most of the time, such as should, must, ought to, always, and never. For instance, they would say, “I should never make any mistakes,” “I must never be laughed at, or else I will become the unwitting class clown,” “I ought to look perfect whenever my ex sees me, or else!” or “I never bother the teacher with my stupid questions.” All these lead to unrealistic expectations for themselves and others.

May you have the courage to be who you are.

Chapter 23. Dealing With Depression

Cognitive behavioral therapy can help you manage the negative thought process that might be making it difficult for you to overcome depression. Depression keeps you from enjoying the best there is in life. Constantly thinking about negative things will keep you depressed. According to scientists, people who struggle with depression do not do so for lack of positive thoughts but because they can hardly allow themselves to think about and feel such thoughts. With depression, the main behavioral change is that people find it difficult to do things, and so they do less and often withdraw from people (Greenberger & Padesky, 2015). The psychological process is referred to as dampening.

Dampening makes you suppress any positive thoughts and emotions. Emotional dampening makes you convince yourself that you do not deserve good things, you do not deserve happiness. Even when something good is happening, you are skeptical, knowing it will not last.

Why does this happen to you when you are depressed? What can you do about it? One possible explanation experts offer is that you give the negative voice in your head a lot of power. It evolves into a pessimistic defense mechanism. What starts as subtle skepticism manifests into a defeatist thought process because you are afraid of getting your hopes up.

No one wants to play the fool in any situation. In response to this fear, you dampen all positive thoughts to stay safe from disappointment. Unfortunately, disappointment is a part of life. Things will not always go your way.

Understanding Depression

One of the biggest struggles you might be having with depression is a sense of pessimism or negativity. Even when good things are happening, you do not trust that they will remain good for a long time. You worry that it is not real, or it will not last long.

It is okay to open up and feel the things you are feeling. It is only human that you do. However, they should not steal your life from you. You have a better life ahead of you, and depression cannot take that away from you. There is always a way out. Speak to

someone. You best believe it; things do get better.

How Does CBT Help with Depression?

CBT is one of the most successful methods of dealing with depression. It is a gradual process where, with the help of your therapist, you define the behavior patterns you need to change. The idea here is to reach into the part of your brain that suppresses the positive thoughts and recalibrate it to enable you to enjoy the good thoughts.

While CBT is effective, you also have to do so much more on your own outside the therapy sessions. You need to make sure you are in an environment that fosters change instead of making things worse. Start with the people around you. There should be a concerted effort to help you ignite the positive thoughts in the brain and encourage new patterns. CBT helps to liberate you from negative thought processes.

CBT Techniques for Depression

Following successful studies, most scientists believe individuals who are battling depression barely succeed with self-study. Therefore, you should seek professional help for no less than six weeks. Your therapist will try to learn more about your case of depression, what makes it worse, and the things you have been through.

There are techniques that your therapist will recommend after understanding what triggers your depression. Here are some possible methods you might work with:

Identifying the Problem

First, your therapist will try to connect with you at a different level and try to get you to let them in. You should try to let them feel the pain you are feeling. Simple conversations with the therapist will help you achieve this milestone.

Where possible, you will be advised to keep a journal. By taking notes, it is easier to refer and make a note of your progress. Taking notes will also help the therapist identify what is making you depressed. With this figured out, you begin the journey to improving the problem.

A feeling of hopelessness is normal when you are depressed. You feel like things are at their worst and will probably not get any better. You will be advised to write down things that are bothering

you, things you are worried about and want to change but, for some reason, you cannot.

Using the example of someone who is depressed because they feel alone or lonely, your therapist might recommend that you join a club that focuses on your interests or some other activity that will help you interact with people freely and more often. Such interactions should help you ease into interactions and open up to new experiences.

Dealing with Negative Thoughts

Since you have already figured out some things that are making you think negatively, the next step would be to counter those thoughts. Note down the negative thoughts that come to mind whenever something happens. These are the thoughts that you give power while suppressing the positive ones.

For each negative thought, you can think of, write a positive statement that you believe can help you overcome it. By writing these thoughts down, they are easier to remember. Rehearse them and try to speak them to yourself whenever you are caught up in a situation where you cannot think positively.

Rehearsal is a repetitive process that will, in the long run, help you replace negative thoughts with positive thoughts. The brain becomes aware of a new line of thinking and the more you tell yourself these positive thoughts, the easier it will be to replace the negative ones.

Since it might not be easy coming up with the ideal positive thoughts, think about something that is not so far from the negative thoughts. Let's assume the first thing that comes to your mind is: "I am not happy with this life. Things don't seem to be going my way."

An ideal positive thought would be: "People struggle all the time, and my case is no different. I have been through bad times before, and this too shall pass."

The message you are getting from this statement is that happiness is a hills and valleys experience, and it is okay. It is also a form of encouragement, keeping you safe from disappointment.

Creating New Opportunities

The next step is to discuss ways of encouraging positive thoughts.

Even when things are not going according to plan, try to find something positive in a bad situation. Say you walk into a room but you dislike the furniture arrangement or the window placement. Instead of dwelling on that, you can appreciate the color on the walls or the paintings.

One way of addressing this is to get a friend that can help you manage your excitement. This way, whenever they come across something you might like, they will let you know immediately and keep you excited. Sharing such experiences throughout the day will go a long way in helping you feel better and think positively.

Evaluate Your Days

At the end of the day, go back to your journal and revisit the events that happened. Visualize the things that made you feel good or you are thankful for. You can also share some of them online if you wish. By revisiting these thoughts, you are making good progress regarding creating new associations in your mind. These are new memories that the brain is getting used to and falling in love with. As you keep doing this, you start having a positive outlook and approach to life.

Embrace Disappointment

Things are not always going to go your way. Disappointment is a part of life, and you should accept that. The way you respond to such a situation will determine how fast you can move on. Your current challenges can be overcome. There is nothing wrong with grieving about a bad situation. It helps you overcome the challenge.

If you have just broken up with someone, it is okay to feel down. However, do not blame yourself for the breakup. Instead, accept that you wanted different things in life and that there is someone out there who will love you just the way you are and in ways no one has ever loved you before.

To embrace disappointment, learn to live within your means. Take each experience you go through as a learning process. Identify your mistakes and promise to correct them in the future. Make changes in your life because they make you feel better and will make you a better version of yourself. Do not make changes because someone wants you to make them or because it suits the narrative, they wish for you. Negative thoughts might occur from time to time, and this

is okay. You should focus

Chapter 24. Be the Best You

On top of utilizing coping techniques and prescribed treatments, lifestyle changes can significantly help those suffering from mental illness. Lifestyle changes may be seemingly simple, but they are actually very powerful tools when it comes to treating social anxiety. In some people's cases, a lifestyle change is all they may need to recover from anxiety. In the case that a person needs other treatment as well, making good lifestyle changes can help cure anxiety even faster and prevent it from happening again.

Here are a few changes that people can try:

- **Exercise:** Researchers have found that regularly exercising can be just as effective as medication when it comes to treating depression. Exercises boost the 'feel-good' brain chemicals in the brain, such as serotonin and endorphins. These chemicals also trigger the growth of new brain cells and connections similar to what antidepressants and anti-anxiety medication do.

The best part about exercise is that you don't need to do it intensely in order to have the benefits. Even a simple 30-minute walk can make a huge difference in a person's brain activity. For the best results, people should aim to do 30 – 60 minutes of aerobic activity every day or on most days.

- **Social Support:** Just like I mentioned earlier, having a strong social network reduces isolation, which is a huge risk factor in anxiety. Make an effort to keep in regular contact with family and friends (ideally on a daily basis) and consider joining a support group or class. You can also opt to do some volunteering where you can get the social support you need while helping others as well.
- **Nutrition:** Eating properly is important for everyone's mental and physical health. By eating well-balanced and small meals throughout the day, it will help you minimize mood swings and keep energy levels up.

Although you may crave sugary foods due to the quick boost that they provide, complex carbohydrates are much more nutritious. They can provide you with an energy boost without a crash at the end.

- **Sleep:** A person's sleep cycle has strong effects on mood. When a person does not get enough sleep, their symptoms of anxiety may get worse. Sleep deprivation causes other negative symptoms like sadness, fatigue, moodiness, and irritability. Not many people can function well with less than seven hours of sleep per night. A healthy adult should be aiming for 7 – 9 hours of sleep every night.
- **Stress reduction:** When a person is suffering from too much stress, it exacerbates their anxiety and puts them at a higher risk of developing more serious anxiety disorders. Try to make changes in your life that can help you reduce or manage stress. Identify which aspects of your life creates the most stress, such as unhealthy relationships or work overload and find ways to minimize their impact and the stress it brings.
- **Quit smoking:** Smoking has been proven to increase anxiety and depression levels due to the mixture of chemicals known to be found within cigarettes. In addition, smoking negatively affects a person's health overall, which can increase feelings of anxiety. Although people with social anxiety may indulge in cigarettes hoping to ease their anxiety, it actually does the opposite.
- **Avoid Caffeine and limit alcohol:** Avoiding caffeine and alcohol is crucial when it comes to treating anxiety and depression. Caffeine and alcohol are both depressants that tend to cause increased heart rate. Since an increased heart rate is a symptom of anxiety, one can easily confuse the symptoms of caffeine with anxiety and make your overall condition worse.
- **Add Omega-3:** Omega-3 has been proven to improve

brain function and has anti-inflammatory benefits. Research has found that omega-3 has numerous benefits for those who are suffering from mental disorders due to the benefits it brings to a person's brain function. Start by consuming more fish and purchasing high omega-3 eggs rather than regular ones.

Meditation/Relaxation Techniques

Mindfulness is also an element in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy but could be utilized on its own through meditation. So what exactly is mindfulness or meditation? Well, mindfulness is a type of meditation that is used as a mental training practice that requires you to focus your mind on your thoughts and sensations in the present moment. Your thoughts include your physical sensations, passing thoughts, and current emotions.

Mindfulness meditation often utilizes mental imagery, breathing practice, muscle and body relaxation, and awareness of your mind and body. For beginners, it is recommended to follow a guided meditation to direct them through the entire process. If there is nobody guiding you through this meditation, it is easy to drift away and fall asleep. That is not the purpose of meditation. When you become more skilled in doing mindfulness meditation, you will be able to do it without a guide or any vocal guidance.

The most original and standardized program for mindfulness meditation is called the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MSBR) program. This meditation was developed by a Ph.D. student who was a student of a famous Buddhist monk. This program focuses on helping the individual bring their awareness to the present and to focus on their own awareness. This meditation has increased in popularity and is not incorporated into medical settings to treat health conditions such as anxiety, insomnia, pain, and stress.

Although this meditation is quite straightforward, professionals would recommend you to find a teacher or a program that can act as a guide when you begin. Most people are recommended to do this meditation for at least 10 minutes per day. If you don't have a lot of free time, that's okay. Even just a few minutes a day plays a huge role in changing your wellbeing. Follow these instructions below to get started:

1. Find a place that is quiet, and you feel comfortable in. Ideally, this is your home or a place where you feel safe. Sit in something comfortable like a chair and make sure your head and back are straight and aligned. Try to release any tension you feel.
1. Begin to sort your thoughts and put away the ones that are of the past or future. Focus on your thoughts that are about the present.
1. Begin to bring your awareness to your breath. Focus on the sensation of air moving through your body when you inhale and exhale. Focus on this feeling. Begin to feel the movement of your belly as it rises and falls. Feel how the air enters through your nostrils and leaves through your mouth. Pay attention to how each breath is different.
1. Watch your thoughts come and go in front of you. Pretend you are watching the clouds, letting them slowly pass before you. It doesn't matter if your thought is a worry, anxiety, hope, or fear - when these thoughts pass by, don't ignore them or suppress them. Simply just acknowledge them calmly and anchor yourself by focusing on your breathing.
1. If you find yourself being carried away by your thoughts, observe where your mind drifted off to, and without judging yourself, simply anchor yourself by focusing on your breathing. This happens a lot with beginners, so don't be hard on yourself if you drift away. Always use your breathing as an anchor.
1. When you are nearing the end of your 10-minute session, sit still for two minutes and bring awareness to your physical location. Get up slowly.

Mindfulness meditation is the simplest technique in the meditation field. However, there are other ways of practicing mindfulness that isn't only in the form of meditation. There are a few opportunities in your day where you can use to practice mindfulness. Here are a

few suggestions of when you may have the time to practice mindfulness:

1. Doing the dishes: This is a wonderful window of time where you can use to practice mindfulness. Typically, when you are doing the dishes, there isn't anyone trying to get your attention. This is a perfect time to try mindfulness. Try to focus on the feeling of warm water on your hands, the look, and feeling of bubbles, the smell of your dish soap, and the sounds of your plates clunking in the water. Try to give yourself to this experience and feel your mind refreshing and your anxiety fading.
1. Brushing your teeth: Since you have to brush your teeth every day, you can use this time frame to practice mindfulness. Start by feeling your weight on your feet against the floor, the feeling of your toothbrush in hand, and the movement as you begin to brush your teeth. Focus on these feelings and the thoughts you are having in the present. Don't dwell; just acknowledge those thoughts as they come and go.
1. Driving: This is one of those activities where it's easy for people to do mindlessly. This is especially relevant if you are driving the same route every day. Make use of this time by not letting your mind wander off to think about tasks that you need to do that day. Practice mindfulness by trying to keep yourself anchored. Take in sensations and visuals like the color of the car in front of you, the smell of your own car, and the feeling of the steering wheel. Focus your attention on all the sounds and noises you hear. If you find yourself wandering, bring your attention back to where you are in your car.
1. Exercising: Make your workout routine a time to also exercise mindfulness. Try to exercise away from screens or music and focus only on your breathing and where your feet are moving. Although watching TV or listening to music will make your workout go

by faster or distract you from any anxiety, it won't actually help in managing any unhealthy thoughts. Bring your attention to feeling how your muscles feel and pay attention to how your body is reacting to your workout. Instead of ignoring the pains you may be feeling, acknowledge it, and let yourself feel the exercise.

1. Bedtime: This is normally the time where you begin to get things ready for the next day. Instead of battling too much with it, just keep in mind what needs to be done. Stop trying to rush through it to get to bed, but try to enjoy the experience of completing those actual tasks. Focus on what needs to be done and don't think about what is next. Start early to leave yourself with enough time, so you don't need to rush through things. Any thoughts or anxieties that come up should be acknowledged and let go.

Help Other People

Helping other people increases one's self-esteem, which produces a positive effect on one's mental health. By helping others, it helps us shift our attention and focus away from ourselves to someone else. Helping others helps us feel grateful for the things that we have, and it feels good to be able to make a difference for someone using your skills. Focusing on yourself is good, especially when you are trying to grow your self-esteem, but helping other people will help your self-esteem grow as well.

According to scientific research, when people help others, the portion of their brain that is responsible for joyful and rewarding feelings becomes activated. That area of the brain that is activated releases the hormones that make us feel good.

What are some ways that you could help others? The simplest and most straightforward way is to just start volunteering in your community. It could be working with children, the homeless, or even just at your local library. This is a good way of gaining some perspective of people that are less fortunate. Often times, some of the things that people are upset with not having, or the constant comparing to others, is immediately gone when you spend some time experiencing how less fortunate people get by. Certain things

that people used to be upset about becomes trivial when they gain a new perspective. Here are a few questions to consider when it comes to helping others:

- Do I like being around children, the elderly, or animals?
- How much of my time am I able to offer to others?
- What belongings do I have and no longer need that someone else can benefit from having?
- What skills do I have that local non-profits in my city could use?
- Do I have the financial resources to donate to a nonprofit of my choice?
- What am I generally interested in?

The way you help others doesn't have to be a grand gesture. You can do something very simple, like paying it forward. You can simply leave behind a few dollars for the next person at your local drive-thru or coffee shop. This will make the day for the next person in line. Or you can just take a friend or family member out for dinner for no reason. There are so many little nice things that you can do for others that will help increase your self-esteem.

Find a Sense of Purpose

Finding a sense of purpose can help improve a person's overall mental state. Without purpose, you begin to stop living your life, and you are 'surviving' it instead. Goals help us stay focused and motivated and creates something for people to work towards and look forward to. Begin simply by thinking about what you care about; this could be your family, your pets, or your career. Identify what it is that you are most passionate about in your life and derive your goals from there.

For instance, if you are passionate about animals, you may want to set a goal of starting your own animal shelter or conservatory. It can even be a much smaller goal, like volunteering at the humane society every week. Whatever it is, choosing a goal for yourself helps create a sense of purpose that will motivate you to stay healthy and focused in your life.

Consider Following a Spiritual Path

Following a spiritual path is a method that people have used to

manage their mental health. Meditations such as Zen meditation is meant to help uncover a person's innate clarity and workability of the mind. Different from the basic forms of meditation, Zen meditation tackles deep-rooted issues and general life questions that often lack answers. Zen meditation delves deeper than other meditation techniques that focus on relaxation and stress relief. Zen meditation is described as "A special transmission outside the teachings; not established upon words and letters; directly pointing to the human heart-mind; seeing nature and becoming a Buddha" by the famous Buddhist master Bodhidharma.

Zen meditation is often learned and practiced in schools of Zen. They normally practice the sitting meditation called zazen. It begins with sitting upright and following the breath, with an emphasis on the movement within the belly. Traditionally, the practice requires a deep and supportive connection between teacher and pupil. In this case, it would be a Zen master and a dedicated student.

Rather than creating or offering temporary solutions to day to day life problems, Zen meditation aims to address core issues. It explores the true causes of unhappiness and dissatisfaction and redirects our focus in a way that brings about true understanding. In this theory, the true key to happiness and well-being isn't wealth or fame. In fact, the key lies within all of us.

Like other types of spirituality, Buddhism teaches that the more you give, the more you gain. It encourages us to bring awareness of the interconnectedness and appreciation that life gives us, all contained within the present moment. A Zen master might tell you that if you look for inner peace, you won't be able to find it. However, the act of giving up that idea that contains a reward and focusing on other people's happiness will create the possibility for lasting peace.

Although you need to train with a Zen master to understand the complicated depths of this spirituality. I am still able to discuss a few Zen meditation techniques with you. The first is the observation of the breath. The second technique is quiet awareness. Here, the meditator will learn to allow their thoughts to flow through their minds without judging, grasping, or rejecting. There is no particular goal to this technique but to just allow their mind to be. The third technique that Zen meditators use is intensive group meditation. Serious and experienced meditators practice regularly in temples or meditation centers.

Conclusion

People use words and their body language in order to have communication with one another and get their ideas across. The skills required to make this communication are known as social skills. There are people who are innately good communicators, who are born with those social skills that make them successful in their lives but there are people who are innately shy and are reserved in their own little worlds just because of the fear of being judged by people if they say something wrong. Or they simply avoid social situation so to not make a fool out of themselves or offend, unintentionally, someone else with their words. This guide is for those people who want to improve their social skills so that they can play a better part in their community and tell people about their own ideas and opinions in an appropriate way.

Communication basically involves three things, verbal, non-verbal skills and assertiveness. Mastering these three skills will make you a better communicator. Non-verbal skills include the body language, gesturing, eye contact, smiling and the tone of the voice. The verbal skills, as obvious, include the use of words and sentences. Assertiveness is the confidence in what you speak. The collaboration between these three skills is very much important for the people to take you seriously. There are tips with which you can excel these skills and be a successful person

Effective conversation plays a major role in any workplace. For an institution to achieve its goals and prosper, effective communication is a compulsion. An institute whether big or small, depends on its employees. An employee can be strength of an institute if he/she has effective conversation skills otherwise it may be a cause of an institute's downfall.

Some institutions arrange different seminars and workshops where they train their employees about effective conversation skills. These trainings help the employees to express their ideas more effectively and appropriately. There are many advantages of effective conversation at a workplace. Some are as follows:

Effective conversation motivates the employees and improves their morale. Employees are able to perform capably when they are contended with their jobs. When the leader is effectively giving feedback to his/her employees and conveying all the required

knowledge and information, only then it will increase the employee's motivation to perform well.

Team building is very important for the goal achievement of any company. Effective conversation helps in building teams comprising of managers and employees who trust each other. It creates an environment in which employees work together towards achieving their common goals. It also reduces unwanted competition between employees. Furthermore, a manager who expresses his ideas effectively to his employees is able to build a positive relationship with his employees that will result in high productivity, eventually benefiting the institute/company.

Effective conversation can also help to overcome the barriers that arise due to workplace diversity. The aim of achieving common goals causes the employees to work effectively and avoid any sort of cultural and language differences through effective conversation.

Effective conversation also plays an important part where the global business is concerned. It helps the company's workforce to understand its' international counterparts. The institutes that train its workers the different skills of effective conversation are able to make their place in the global markets.

Chapter 25. Stop Overthinking

Congratulations on downloading Stop Overthinking: Develop daily habits for Self Discipline, Mental Toughness, Resilience & Stoicism. Practical guide for Programming your Mind, Cure Procrastination, get more Productivity from life. Thank you for doing so.

These days overthinking diverse life circumstances and other easygoing things is an across the board issue. It does not imply that instructing yourself or thinking over your issues is something awful, however on the off chance that you have a propensity to bend everything around in your mind until you see it in each point and plausibility, at that point you are an over-thinker. Thinking over different things and occasions is a characteristic piece of life for some individuals. It, as a rule, causes individuals to discover arrangements of their issues and prepares them to confront life challenges and overcome obstructions.

There is an incredible assortment of focal points and disservices of being an over-thinker. Do you prefer to know the reasons why those irritating considerations about different issues cause you to overthink? Peruse on to discover a couple of irrefutable reasons why you overthink your issues.

1. You can't unwind

It frequently turns out that you cannot get your psyche off the issue you cannot quit thinking about. Numerous delicate individuals live in consistent strain since they do not have the foggiest idea of how to unwind and supplant the chain of negative musings by positive ones. The most ideal way to divert yourself from overthinking is to practice or do yoga. Yoga is an ideal apparatus to quiet your rich creative mind down and alleviation your stresses over the issue. Simply take a sit and envision a glad spot that makes you feel certain, free and fulfilled.

2. A steady worrier

Stressing is a characteristic response to new and obscure things. As indicated by various looks into numerous youngsters are worriers essentially. They frequently think that it is hard to envision how things can go right. These individuals pull in issues since they want

to attract horrendous pictures of their psyches. It is alluring to concentrate on positive musings and thoughts on the best way to achieve your objectives than thinking about your disappointments. It is conceivable to change your qualities of character and propensities, and you will be able to sufficiently overcome stresses. Do your best to turn into a hopeful person and create a constructive vision of the world.

3. Absence of certainty

Absence of certainty is one of the primary things which cause the issue of overthinking. When you dither about things you do, you let vulnerability and dread fill your brain. No one can tell where your choices will lead you, that is the reason you should go out on a limb without tormenting yourself. When you begin making choices, you will consequently help your certainty. When you are certain and solid, you will overcome all troubles without making a decent attempt.

4. Overthinking is only an inclination

Overthinking your issues and steady research of your activities frequently transform into an unfortunate propensity. This propensity more often than not keeps you stuck from having a glad existence. It is very hard to end this mind-desensitizing propensity, yet you ought to consistently attempt to discover yourself overthinking and change these irritating considerations. When you feel that your mind starts to deliver a dramatization, you ought to possess yourself on some fascinating and including action. It will enable you to overcome overthinking. Thinking is an inescapable piece of your life that causes you to achieve objectives and keep away from inconveniences, however, you should realize the contrast among thinking and overthink. The inclination to overthink issues can negatively affect your wellbeing.

5. Overthinking is a security

Some of the time individuals accept that overthinking can be a sort of security from inconveniences. The snare of overthinking is slaughtering your advancement. There is more profit by activity than from inaction since encounters make you progressively develop and more grounded. Overthinking grows both your insurance and the opportunity to lose an open door since your mind is continually discussing the circumstance, scrabbling for another

arrangement.

6. You need to be immaculate

You ought to know about the way that the expenses of being a stickler are high. Numerous individuals who battle with compulsiveness generally live inclination on edge constantly. Hairsplitting causes overthinking since sticklers consistently attempt to improve. They may likewise wake up amidst the night thinking about what should be finished. Such a way of life can without much of a stretch harm your psychological and physical prosperity. You ought to comprehend that no one's ideal and it is smarter to dispose of the propensity for overthinking everything.

7. Re-thinking yourself

It is smarter to settle on choices all the more effectively and rapidly. You should simply to dispose of the propensity to re-think yourself. Re-thinking makes you audit the circumstance over and over in your brain since you have a hunch that you have not done things appropriately. Subsequently, you are forever discontent or substance that you have settled on the correct decision. Attempt to be progressively certain about yourself and in your capacities. It will enable you to be less fixated on your easygoing choices as the day progressed.

Chapter 26. Why Overthinking?

Letting negativity build up in your life for a long time can bring a lot of consequences. Thankfully, we have found a way of overcoming and eliminating negativity. After overcoming and eliminating negativity, you have to deal with any consequences that may be left behind. It is easy to eliminate someone or a bad habit but the consequences caused by that habit may stay around much longer. For instance, you may decide to eliminate your behavior of sexual promiscuity after a long time. While it is a positive step in your life, the consequences associated with such behavior such as STIs may remain behind. The same case applies to negativity and negative emotions. You may finally find a way of eliminating negative energy but the consequences of negativity may remain behind.

One of the biggest consequences of negativity is overthinking. You may find that people who have suffered abuse or failure end up overthinking. Overthinking is mainly caused by negativity. The feelings of failure, unworthiness, and remorse often lead to overthinking.

Different Causes of Overthinking

There are many causes of overthinking associated with negativity. Although some people overthink in a positive way, many people overthink negatively. Some of the negative causes of overthinking include:

Low self-esteem: When a person is suffering from low self-esteem, they will often be found in isolation and deep thoughts. Suffering from low self-esteem is a consequence of letting negativity take root to the core. When you allow negative poisonous words of people get into your system, you start believing that you are worthless. Low self-esteem brings constant feelings of undeserving. Some individuals suffering from low self-esteem may contemplate suicide and often suffer from anxiety.

Fear: Another cause of overthinking is fear. Fear is brought about by thinking of the future and the past. If a person is not sure where life is headed, they will be found thinking a lot. A person who is

afraid of something will keep on thinking about it. Fear causes someone to have subconscious thoughts about something. Even if you are not thinking about it actively, you will often find your subconscious mind drifting back to that instance. The best way to overcome this type of overthinking is facing your fear. Once you deal with the situation that is giving you so much fear, you will forget about it and live your life in happiness.

Shame: Shame causes overthinking to most people, even those who are emotionally strong. If you go through a shameful instance, it might be public humiliation or something that happened in a closed group you feel embarrassed. In either case, being exposed to public ridicule or being ashamed in front of family members may lead to overthinking. Although it is normal for a person to think about a shameful moment, letting your mind be focused on shameful moment's builds negativity. If you choose to focus on moments of weakness you take away your ability to focus on the future. Shame is something that will always be part of life. You must remind yourself that the shameful instance only occurred once and that it is not likely to happen. If you come to a place where you can encourage yourself to rise above shame, you build your self-esteem and build positivity. The best way to overcome shame and negativity is to always remind yourself that shameful moments don't last forever. A shameful moment may just last for a few days but it will eventually go away.

Loss: Another big cause of overthinking is a loss. When people undergo huge losses, they are often found thinking for long hours. You do not have to spend a lot of time thinking just because you have lost something or someone. You may spend a few days thinking about someone you loved so much but that should not be your ultimate life. After losing someone or something, you should remember that you have your life to pursue. The best way to deal with loss is by letting go. Accepting the reality of the situation no matter how difficult it may be. Before you come to the point of acceptance, it is not possible to let go. First, you accept that a loss has happened and that there is nothing you can do about it. After accepting, look at your life and find a way of moving on. Take your mind away from any negative thoughts and start focusing on achieving your dreams.

Failure: Failing to achieve something may also lead to overthinking.

Overthinking because of failure is just a way of encouraging negative energy. All the successful people in the world have encountered failure. There is no single human being who has not made a mistake or failed to do something. Understanding that you are just human will help you overcome the pain of failure. Focusing on failure so much also stops you from pursuing other areas of life where you might succeed. Instead of focusing on one area where you have already failed, it is better to focus on an area of life where you have a chance of succeeding.

Rejection: It is unfortunate that some people are so much drowned within the sea of worries because of being rejected. Rejection is not something you have control over. However, you have control over your emotions and thoughts. Being rejected by someone or some organization is not your fault. Stop trying to find the reason why he left you for her. The fact that someone is willing to leave your awesome life does not mean that you are weak or a bad person. When you feel dejected and worried because of rejection, you give the other person control over your life. You should not allow a person who has rejected you to control your life.

What Are The Symptoms Of Overthinking?

Overthinking is a disorder that must be corrected. If it is not handled early enough, overthinking may develop into other mental disorders that are more painful and costly. Here are the top symptoms of overthinking.

- You relive embarrassing moments in your head:

If you find yourself constantly living in an embarrassing moment, you are probably suffering from overthinking. It is okay to think about embarrassing moments but you should not relive the moment constantly. When you relive a moment, you feel like that moment is happening again right in your head. You may even show facial expressions of embarrassment. If people around you start asking why you act embarrassed, chances are that you are behaving embarrassed.

- Trouble going to sleep

The most obvious sign of overthinking is sleeping problems. People

who overthink find it hard shutting the brain down. You may find yourself straining your brain to settle but nothing works. If you realize that you stay up late and wake up early, you need to examine your thinking process. You may be paying too much attention to the past or the future.

- You ask yourself a lot of questions

Do you find yourself asking what-if questions? If you ever spend your time thinking about what would have happened if you had done things the other way, you are suffering from overthinking. "What if" questions will never add anything to your life. Spending too much time wondering if you would have done things right does not make things right. Even if you make the biggest mistake of your life, you must accept that it has already happened and move on to the next phase. Spending too much time wondering what would have happened if you would have done things differently does not make things different. It only makes it hard for you to go past that specific moment.

- You try to find hidden meaning in people's words

Overthinking often leads to paranoia. You will find yourself looking at everybody with a third eye. You start looking for hidden meanings in what people say. Overthinking especially in relationships is associated with insecurity. You are unable to trust the person around you and you constantly ask investigative questions. You often find yourself drawing conclusions based on someone's words. Most people who overthink often end up starting rumors or conspiracy theories. You start imagining that there are things that happen in this world that you do not know about.

- Going over past conversations in your mind

Do you find yourself trying to redo an interview or a conversation you had before? People who overthink tend to focus on past conversations. They try making the conversation better in their mind and sometimes may be heard speaking out loud. One of the main symptoms of overthinking is speaking to yourself. Your thinking gets too loud to an extent that it cannot be contained in the mind. You relive conversations to the extent of speaking them out as if you were having the same conversation again. In most cases, people overthink when a conversation did not go right.

Probably, you answered an interview question in the wrong way. Unfortunately, overthinking or rehashing a conversation does not make anything better. When you get such thoughts coming back to your mind, you must dismiss them. Being self-aware of your thought process will help you stop overthinking.

- Lack of concentration

People who overthink are often found lost in another world. If you are constantly found lost in your thoughts and unaware of what is happening around you, you are probably overthinking. When you overthink, your mind is transported to another world. You do not pay attention to what you are doing and in most cases; you may run into an accident. If you realize that people often have to tap your shoulder for attention or call your name out a loud, you have to start examining your thinking process. At this stage, your thought process has been corrupted to such an extent that you no longer live in the real world. Most of your days are spent in another world reliving moments from the past

- You are always worried

Worries are as a result of overthinking. When a person overthinks, he/she keeps on wondering what if this and that may happen. These thoughts may focus on the future or the past. When a person is thinking about the past, he/she will worry about the consequences of the choices they made in the past. You will find yourself asking questions like; what if I was wrong? On the other hand, people may also think about the future. What if such things happen in the future? Thinking about the future and the past will only give you unnecessary worries. Things that have already happened cannot be redone. The future is something abstract. Until you understand that the future only exists in your mind, you will keep on wasting a lot of time thinking about tomorrow. You should always remind yourself that life is good today and that you should enjoy it.

How To Control Overthinking

You need to find a way of controlling your thoughts. Controlling your thoughts is not easy especially after going through an embarrassing moment. However, you need to control your thinking for your own good. There are many ways to control your thinking.

Be aware of your thoughts: Try practicing self-awareness if you find yourself constantly drifting to another world. When you are aware of your thoughts, you will interrupt them and stop thinking in the same direction. Unfortunately, most people who suffer from overthinking disorder do not even recognize that they are overthinking. When a person is in a state of thinking, the thoughts keep on piling up in a chain process, with one leading to another.

To enhance your awareness, start practicing self-awareness in your daily life. A practical exercise includes reflecting on your thought process after every few minutes. Ask yourself what you have been thinking about the last 1 hour or 30 minutes. You may even set reminders on your phone to help you check your thought process after a few minutes. The reminder will constantly get you out of your negative thoughts and set you on the right path again. Self-awareness should help you forgo thinking and start focusing on your life at the moment.

- Choose the things you want to think about

If you realize that overthinking is always occupying your mind, find something different to think about. This will help you deal with the negative thoughts that go through your head. You may decide to think about the most beautiful things in your life. If you have someone you love, you may choose to think about their beauty and everything good they add to your life. Finding a different focal point for your thoughts will help you control your thought process.

In essence, the two basic ways of controlling your thinking are interrupting your thought process and focusing on a different thinking direction. Since overthinking is about negativity in most cases, you need to interrupt the continuous flow of negative thoughts in your head. Stop any thought that does not lead to productivity through self-awareness and setting reminders. This will prohibit you from going deep into the world of negativity. Once you interrupt the thought process from negativity, focus it on beauty. Look at your life and think about things that are beautiful, lovely and attractive. Life has both positive and negative sides. Although the mind always wants to focus on simple mistakes and negative events, you are the one to control the negativity. You may train your mind to start thinking positively and concentrate on positivity at all times. Once you can stop your thoughts and redirect them,

you completely gain control over your thinking and as a result, manage to control overthinking.

How To Stop Overthinking

It is one thing to control overthinking but a different story entirely to stop it. Controlling overthinking entails interrupting and disrupting the overthinking process. You may use reminders and other thoughts to interrupt your mind and control overthinking. However, most often than not, people who try disrupting the thinking process without addressing the root cause often drift back into their thoughts. To stop overthinking, you need to address the cause from the root. You need to examine the cause of your thoughts and deal with it. Controlling overthinking only deals with the symptoms, but stopping overthinking deals with the root cause. Here is a simple step by step process to help you stop overthinking.

Step 1: Find the root cause: The first thing you need to do is find the root of your thinking. As soon as you notice that there are symptoms of overthinking showing up in your life, examine your thought process to determine what you are constantly thinking about. In most cases, you will find that you think because of worry or fear. If you are afraid or worried about something happening, you will spend a lot of time thinking. The positive side of overthinking is usually due to anticipation. Even anticipation of good things should not occupy your mind. You must deal with all these factors to totally stop overthinking about things that may or may not happen.

Step 2: Accept the situation: You need to accept the situation that has led to your fears and worries. You need to accept that this has already happened and that there is nothing you can do about it. However, if there is something you can do about it to make it better, take action immediately. Taking action to stop something bad from happening will also alleviate thinking. Constantly thinking about something that already happened or is about to happen does not help. If it is something that has already happened, except that it is done. If it something that is yet to happen, you can take action about it. Taking action does not necessarily mean stopping it from happening but reducing consequences if possible. Think about your worries and examine the ones you can salvage. If there is nothing you can salvage, stop thinking about it and take action.

Step 3: Face your fears and address your worries: Overthinking is null thinking process that does not result in any solution. However, you need to stand up to your fears if you want to stop thinking about it. The first thing you should do after examining the cause of your worries is to ask yourself what you can do about it. In the case of fear, you only have an option of facing it. Facing your fears entails preparing yourself to stand for your rights and being ready for the consequences of your mistakes. Some of the ways to face your fears include accepting punishment, offering an apology, grieving in terms of loss among others. If you have been overthinking because of a mistake you did at the office, you may choose to face the fear by offering an apology and being ready to take the consequences. One of the things you must constantly keep in your mind is that life cannot be determined by one instance. Even when you lose a job, always remember that there is another option for you. You should be ready to face the consequences of every situation knowing that it's just a moment in life. That moment does not stop life from moving on any grounds.

Step 4: Move on: The other big cause of fear is staying in the past. Whatever happened has already happened and thinking about it does not take it away. In fact, spending too much time thinking about it only brings pain. People who have been heartbroken in relationships tend to spend too much time thinking about the past. You must find a way of dealing with such thoughts. The thoughts of having a relationship with a person who has already rejected you only bring pain. To completely stop the overthinking process, move on.

Moving on means that you open a new chapter in life. If you are overthinking because you lost a job, open a new chapter by starting a business or looking for another job. If it is due to a broken relationship, move on to another relationship. If it is due to the loss of life of a friend, accept the realities and move on. Moving on means that you choose to focus your mind on something else that gives you joy. One of the best tactics of controlling your thought process is finding something else that keeps you busy. Moving on gives you the chance to think objectively. When you are still attached to someone or something, it is hard to think soberly. However, when you move on, you start seeing the positives and negatives of the matter clearly.

Chapter 27. Procrastination

What Causes Procrastination?

If procrastination is something that everyone has to deal with at multiple points throughout their life, can it really be all that bad? Despite the many health and well-being risks associated with habitual procrastinating and overthinking, there are still those who refuse to believe that their personal habits and compulsions are under control and far from being dangerous to their mind or body.

Pro Tip: This denial is one of the challenges all people wanting to take control of their habits and behaviors must overcome before any forward progress can be made. If someone is unwilling to acknowledge their issue and make a conscious decision to change, then they are not going to be able to improve their behaviors or psychological habits.

However, there is plenty of hope and proven techniques out there that have made all the difference for those wanting to give up procrastinating and overthinking. The most recent studies have shown that the development of habitual procrastination can be traced back to four main psychological causes:

Unable to Focus or Gain Control of Thoughts: Sometimes people who have difficulty with controlling their thoughts or getting themselves to focus have their behaviors being controlled by their emotions rather than their logical thoughts. Emotions are truthful and powerful, but they are also unpredictable and capable of changing without warning, especially for those with existing psychological conditions.

Fear of Failure & Fear of the Unknown: These are perfectly natural phobias that every person faces at some point in their life. While for many the fear disappears once a plan has been made or more information has been gathered, but for others these types of fears (which can be encountered in nearly any given situation) can lead to full-blown panic attacks and other emotional reactions can affect their behavior and inspire psychological habits like procrastination and overthinking to take control of all thought and action.

Lack of Motivation & Low Levels of Energy: These two traits

are often connected as many who find themselves trying to cope with procrastination also have experience with larger psychological concerns like depressive states, suicidal behaviors in extreme cases, and the development of anti-social behaviors related to lack of confidence or faith in their own talents, abilities or future potential. This negative thinking constantly circling through their mind can leave damage on an individual's self-esteem, a negative emotion that comes with physical side effects such as fatigue, low immune system efficiency and muscle soreness throughout the body with little to no physical strain to cause it.

Need to Reach Perfection: This is a common trait that comes with the fear of failure and is one of the main causes of procrastination. Through their previous experiences with procrastination and their tendency to overthink, they begin to believe that the only way they will be able to complete something or come to a proper resolution is if their application is totally flawless. Of course, perfection is an often impossible bar for people to reach, particularly when distractions, interruptions and unwelcome challenges can arise at any time and throw off even the most well-planned solutions.

There are still those out there that argue habits like procrastination and overthink cannot be nearly as harmful as people claim they are since everyone deals with them at some point but not everyone falls prey to their control of behaviors and reactions to situations throughout life. Recent studies have looked into this fact as well as determined that the reason not everyone develops dangerous psychological habits because there are those in the population that are more susceptible to the negative and long-term effects than others.

In the following comical chart, it is easy to see the type of distracting thoughts and actions people take when avoiding their tasks and responsibilities, along with the fluctuations in stress levels that come with giving in to habitual procrastination.

While the image itself may have a comical tone, it is an accurate and widely relatable visual of the types of thoughts that dominate someone's mind when procrastination habits have control over a person's mind, emotions and behaviors.

What Kinds of People Are Most Likely to Become

Procrastinators?

Like with all psychological habits and behaviors there are some with different personalities and lifestyle variables that can be more or less likely to develop procrastination or overthinking habits. Some of these common variables and personality types include:

Perfectionists: People who struggle with being a perfectionist often also have difficulties controlling their impulse to procrastinate. One of the main reasons for this is because people who take pride in perfection and faultless execution in everything they do are less concerned with not getting a task done than they are finishing something that is flawed in any form. However, for many procrastinating perfectionists, the closer their deadline comes or the higher the pressure gets for them to take action, the more panic sets in as they find themselves in a panicked frenzy to complete their task.

Students: Students, regardless of age or education level, are some of the most common victims of procrastination and overthinking. One of the reasons for this is often connected to a lack of confidence in their own talents and abilities that causes them to obsess about each and every detail of their assignments until they are trapped in a whirlwind of thoughts that keeps them from completing their task. Another one of the main reasons for student procrastination is the self-deception that comes with the belief that they perform better under the pressure of a nearly impossible deadline. Despite being told over and over by their friends and family that they will not only feel better, but that the quality of their work will improve if they didn't procrastinate, the impulse is too strong in many cases and the need to put off their responsibilities takes over.

Pro Tip: Those who use this excuse are able to convince themselves that they will be able to complete their task to their best ability even in the shortened amount of time typically because they have done it before. It only takes one successful event for the habit to start and take control. The first time someone procrastinates and is still able to complete their task or find their solution in time for someone to start procrastinating as a matter of habit and compulsion.

People Pleasers: Those who find themselves constantly surrounded or often outnumbered by people who are difficult to please often become procrastinators. These types of people are eager for those

around them (both peers and superiors) to see them in a certain light. It could be that they lied or fictionalized something about themselves in order to paint this picture for their friends or co-workers, or it could be that there is no reason for the person to feel inferior to those around them because they are just as experienced or talented, but do not see it because their self-esteem has been so wrecked by their procrastinating and overthinking habits.

Those Who Have Learned Through Experience: Those who procrastinated until they were under the gun and managed to come out on top without consequence once or twice by accident are more likely to develop a problem with habitual procrastination because their experience has taught them that they are still able to put out quality work or make solid decisions without having to spend the effort and energy on the time management skills and patience it would take to achieve their goal in a timely and comparatively stress-free manner. While they may consider themselves lucky at first, the longer this habit is allowed to develop and is practiced by the individual, the further the quality of their work and performance (often in various aspects of their life) will slip until those they work or interact with take notice and action.

The Connection Between Procrastination & Overthinking

While the two are often symptoms of a larger psychological concern that should be acknowledged and explored, habitual procrastinating and overthinking have also been linked as being the cause for one another. Overthinkers who consider themselves driven and motivated in everything they do find that over time, their psychological habit of obsessing over small interactions or replaying regrets through their mind can develop into habitual procrastination over time as these individuals try to find ways to distract themselves from their dominating thoughts and emotions, often pushing aside responsibilities or pressing tasks to avoid having to think about them.

Alternately, those who start as procrastinators may find over time that they are overthinking more and more about the things happening around them, personally and professionally. One of the main reasons for this is that those who are self-aware enough to recognize their impulse to procrastinate in matters from choosing where they want to eat dinner to delivering a major presentation to

their employers are also emotionally intelligent enough to realize that the anxiety and panicked emotions that come with that habit are only increasing their stress and decreasing their chances of success. Unfortunately, although they are aware of their habitual procrastinating and overthinking, the compulsive behaviors associated with those habits are more powerful than rational thinking and are often determined by how the individual is feeling at any given moment. This only makes the habitual overthinking worse as it brings up questions like why the person can't just make themselves take an action or make a decision and why they start procrastinating every time they face something, knowing how much stress, regret and guilt comes with the process.

Another connection that is common between the development of procrastination and overthinking habits is a third psychological stage that is fueled by emotions like the fear of failing and the awareness of passing time and burning energy that could be used more productively. This stage is an overwhelming guilt that also comes with negative health and wellness effects like fluctuating stress levels and uncertainty of one's ability to accomplish anything.

Use This Newly Gained Knowledge & Get the Answers You Have Been Searching For!

Now that the knowledge has been collected, it is time to put it to use and start preparing for those first steps forward with taking control of your mind, behaviors and emotions in order to conquer your habitual overthinking and/or procrastination.

As with any plan, the first step is to take a step back and analyze the situation as a whole. Answer these questions about yourself or the person you are concerned for to get a better read on the big picture and the individual factors that may affect treatment:

What behaviors have you noticed that could be connected to habitual procrastination or overthinking?

What is the individual's personality type? Do they fall into the category of higher risk personalities?

What specific factors could be causing the habitual procrastination or overthinking?

Are there certain situations where their behaviors, thoughts

and actions (or lack thereof) can be identified as compulsive or driven by emotion rather than rational decisions?

Have you (or the individual in question) acknowledged and accepted that there is a problem with these habitual compulsions that is hindering their ability to function at their full potential?

The Origins Have Been Explored. Traits Have Been Analyzed. What's Next for Breaking These Habits?

Now that the foundation has been laid for better understanding of psychological concerns like procrastination and overthinking habits and information has been shared about who is statistically most likely to develop these habits over others, it is time to start making an actionable plan for how to change the way the mind thinks and views the world so that impulses like procrastination and overthinking lose their power over your behaviors. Answer the following questions to determine whether or not you are prepared to begin taking control of your mental and psychological health in order to improve the health of your whole being:

Have you fully acknowledged your individual negative psychological habit or multiple habits?

Are you prepared to make conscious decisions and alterations to your behaviors and reactions?

Can you stick to these changes, overcoming your emotional impulses that may arise and challenge your determination?

Are you ready for a better life packed with as much fulfillment, success and discovery as you can fit into each day?

If the answers to these questions are all yes, then it is time to get started and time to take control of any and all psychological behaviors to make the most of life and everything it has to offer!

Chapter 28. Mindfulness

Learning how to practice mindfulness is very important. It can help you to be more aware of yourself and your surroundings. It can really help you to understand your emotions. You can figure out what you are feeling, why you are feeling that way, and how you should respond to those feelings. If you are feeling down, practicing mindfulness can bring you back and help you to find positivity when you need it the most. Being mindful can teach you to pay attention to the smaller details and really live in the moment. It will allow you to live life to the fullest and appreciate everything that life has to offer.

Understanding mindfulness can benefit you by showing you how you may benefit by practicing mindfulness and allowing yourself to become more mindful. Learning to practice mindfulness will teach you how to become a master of your own mind and develop a sense of awareness of both yourself and the world outside of yourself. You may incorporate mindfulness into your life by a few simple and quick habits. It's easy to make your daily routine more mindful and to check in with yourself occasionally and be more mindful of your thoughts, actions, and emotions. To stay motivated on your mindfulness journey, you must recognize and remind yourself of the benefits of mindfulness. You may not have even heard of mindfulness, but it is a great tool to incorporate into your life to make the most of your everyday life.

What is Mindfulness?

To practice mindfulness, you must know what it is and how you can practice it. It is more than simply thinking or having a mind. Mindfulness is the tool that you can use to be fully aware of yourself and your surroundings. It means that you are present in the moment instead of being distracted by the outside world, the past, or the future. Instead of worrying, you will be fully focused on the present. When you are mindful, you will be able to concentrate on what is currently happening. You may realize what it is that you are doing and how that makes you feel.

It is so tempting to get caught up in a number of distractions. Our devices constantly have new notifications on them. There is always

a new person to talk to, a new task to complete, or a new place to visit. We get caught up in the shows we watch, the games we play, and everything happening around us. However, it's important to not lose touch with reality. Sometimes, it's crucial to bring your focus back to yourself and really concentrate on what's going on. Instead of worrying about the future or regretting the past, you must be able to concentrate on the present moment. If you are always waiting for happiness, it will never come. You must be able to live in and enjoy the present moment so that you can really live your life instead of having it always control you.

Mindfulness is also about not being completely reactive to everything. Sometimes, it's necessary for you to just live in the moment instead of reacting to it. Instead of being overwhelmed by everything happening, you can learn to enjoy all of the details. Instead of letting your judgment rule you, you can go with the flow and just live. It can allow you to be more curious about the world around you instead of making immediate assumptions and letting your first thoughts influence your behavior. You will allow yourself to think more deeply and truly reflect on what is going on.

Mindfulness is a natural quality; it is instinctual to be mindful. One doesn't create mindfulness. It is, rather, a skill that must be sharpened and looked into. You must learn how to access your mindfulness and use it the best that you can. Much like building your biceps with arm exercises, you can strengthen your mindfulness with practice and certain techniques. You don't need to change yourself to develop mindfulness. You only need to bring out the best of yourself to use it well. Anyone can learn how to be more mindful. It is a way of living, and you can make it a part of your routine. It is easy to learn, and it has been proven to provide you with results. When you are mindful, you will be able to accept what is going on around you without adding your own judgment to it. It is a way of existing and appreciating what is happening.

Practicing Mindfulness

To build a habit, you must learn how to practice it. This is true for mindfulness. You must learn how to practice mindfulness so that you can begin practicing it in your life. Once you understand how to practice mindfulness, you can begin incorporating it into your life and make it a part of your routine. It can help you to improve your day and become more aware of your surroundings. With

practice, mindfulness can come naturally to you. Although it will take effort at first, mindfulness can be a very simple habit to incorporate into your life.

To practice mindfulness, you will have to become more aware of your thoughts. Instead of allowing yourself to become absorbed in your worries, reacting to the world around you, or adding your judgment to each situation, you must become focused on the present and your life. It's important to develop a connection to the world around you and to be able to pay attention to how you feel and think. Mindfulness is about learning how to center your focus back to yourself instead of allowing yourself to get caught up in all of these thoughts.

You can practice mindfulness anywhere. You may choose to practice mindfulness during a routine activity, such as taking a shower or eating breakfast. Mindfulness is appropriate for any time, any place, and any person. You can choose to practice mindfulness while in motion or while staying still. What's important to remember is that you must be able to focus and shut off all distractions. When practicing mindfulness, you will instead focus on yourself and the world around you. It is as simple as paying attention to your senses. Focusing on your movement, breathing, anything that you smell, and more can make a huge difference. You are always going to smell, taste, hear, see, and feel. However, you aren't aware of your senses when you are lost in thought. It takes focus to be able to experience those senses. When you become mindful, you are more aware of what those senses are experiencing. You are tapping into what is already there but typically ignored.

Mindfulness also involves an awareness of your thoughts. You constantly have new thoughts, process them, judge them, and generate more thoughts from them. However, mindfulness involves observing your thoughts. Instead of processing them and judging them, you can listen to your thoughts. Just allow them to happen without feeling the need to do anything with them. Thoughts are constantly changing. Allow yourself to observe your thoughts moving from one subject to another without feeling the need to dive deeper and act on those thoughts. When you let your thoughts take over you, you will become overwhelmed, stressed, and anxious. By allowing yourself to be higher than those thoughts, you are separating yourself from your thoughts. You can be present in

the moment instead of getting caught up in a path to the past or future. You will feel much better knowing that you have the power to control your thoughts, not let them control you.

Incorporating Mindfulness

Incorporating mindfulness into your life is easier than you would think. There are many ways that you can incorporate it into your life, as it is very versatile. Mindfulness can be practiced at home, at work, and even while you're out. It doesn't take any special tools or supplies to practice mindfulness, and it doesn't cost any money. While there are ways that you can add to your experience, such as getting a mindful meditation app or taking a class to become more mindful, you can practice mindfulness yourself whenever and wherever you would like. You may even pair it with activities that you already do every day.

One way that you may incorporate mindfulness into your life is by practicing it during every meal. Instead of mindlessly eating while going on your phone or watching the television, eat with mindfulness. Really take the time to focus on your food and eliminate other distractions. Not only will you feel more satisfied, but you will feel fuller and more nourished, which can eliminate the habit of overeating. You will never "miss" a meal, as you will be focused on your food. Take the time to enjoy every bite. Pay attention to how your food looks, tastes, and smells. This will help you to live in the present and enjoy your mealtime much more.

Start practicing mindfulness in every aspect of your routine. When you shower, enjoy the feeling of the water hitting your skin, really massage the shampoo into your scalp and relish in its refreshing, clean feeling. While driving, focus on the road; practice mindfulness instead of letting your mind wander. Choose activities that you can really put your focus on. Pick a hobby that you feel passionately about. It's great to have something that you can fully invest yourself into and distract yourself from your thoughts with. You may like reading and getting lost in a good book. Perhaps running is your way of focusing. No matter what it is, having a hobby that you really enjoy and can focus on is great. You may also want to try new things, as you can get lost in the thrill of newness. Travel somewhere new, try new foods, switch your routine around, or decorate your house. You will find that you are more mindful in the present when you experience new experiences.

You may also go for mindful walks. Get yourself outside in the fresh air and really enjoy it. Focus on your movement. Concentrate on how your feet connect with the ground and leave it again. Notice how your body supports you and your movement. Focus your attention on your surroundings. Listen to the bird's chirp. Watch the clouds move. Smell the fresh air. When you can develop an appreciation for the world around you, you will be more grateful for life and much happier.

Taking a moment every day to focus on your breathing is another great way to incorporate mindfulness into your life. Focus while taking deep breaths. This can assist you with relaxation and unwinding. It may also help you if you feel particularly stressed or overwhelmed by a certain situation that may have occurred. Become aware of the expansion that occurs when you breathe in and how your body contracts when you breathe out. Take deep breaths to really fill your body with new air, while exhaling to release all of the old air. Free yourself from your thoughts by focusing on your breathing.

Throughout your day, you may also choose to take pauses. Take a moment before you act to really let the action sink in. After sitting, take a pause to become aware of how your body feels in the chair. Before sleeping, pay attention to how your head feels on the pillow. Focus on the feeling of your blanket against your body. Enjoy the darkness and the peace it brings you. Pausing to enjoy the little moments in life will center you, clear your mind, and give you greater appreciation for the finer details that life offers you.

When others are talking to you, listen to them. Instead of getting lost in your thoughts or thinking about what you will say next, truly listen to what others are saying. Don't judge their words; let them sink in. Others will appreciate you more for it, and you will be able to absorb more information. Make it your goal to focus only on what others are saying when they are talking. Let their words resonate with you.

Meditation is a wonderful way to practice mindfulness. You may take some time to set aside for your daily meditation. Meditation can really help you to improve your mindfulness, and it is a great activity to add to your routine. You will feel a variety of benefits as a result of meditation.

Benefits of Mindfulness

Mindfulness can really help you. You will be able to focus on the present moment much more, instead of getting caught up in countless thoughts about the past or future. You will be able to make decisions better because of your increased ability to focus on what you would like to. You will feel more energized and motivated to accomplish all of your goals, as you will have a clearer mind and will stop focusing on the negatives in life. This will help you to accomplish more and be much more productive. Mindfulness will allow you to have access to greater opportunities and do more with your life.

You will also feel more energized. Instead of being weighed down by your thoughts and having little motivation to get out and accomplish your goals, you will feel a new sense of energy. You will be able to enjoy the present moment and have a greater appreciation for all that life offers you. This will also give you a new sense of hope and wonder. The world will seem like a more positive place that has so many wonderful details for you to become happy from. Mindfulness can really help you to live your fullest life.

Learning mindfulness is crucial. You need mindfulness to be able to take control of your thoughts instead of having them control you. This will allow you to minimize the overthinking, stress, and anxiety in your life. You will instead be able to be present in the moment. It will be much easier for you to observe your thoughts instead of getting caught up in them. Mindfulness is not a talent or a skill. It is, rather, something that we all possess but must tap into. Your senses will always work; your thoughts and feelings will always be present. However, you must be able to practice mindfulness and make a conscious effort to do so. It may not seem natural at first, yet it can really help you to improve your way of thinking.

You must understand what mindfulness is before you can begin to practice it. Mindfulness is focusing on the present and your thoughts, feelings, and surroundings instead of the countless distractions around you. To practice mindfulness, you must allow your body to focus and shift your concentration to the present. It is quite simple to incorporate mindfulness into your everyday life, as it is something you can practice at any time and in any place. It is

free, easy, and can last as long as you would like. Mindfulness can truly benefit you, and it is worth it to try.

Chapter 29. Resilience and Stoicism

Everyone has not welcomed the renewed popularity of Stoicism. Stoicism is sometimes criticized as an outdated philosophy, a relic of ancient thinking with no place in the modern world. Some people say it's unrealistic, that we can't really control our emotions just by changing our belief system. Other people say we shouldn't even try and that Stoicism would keep us from ever experiencing love or joy. Does Stoicism increase good feelings as its practitioners' claim, or does the rejection of the passions lead to a gray life with no emotional depth?

The great Stoics, like Epictetus, taught that our thoughts are the main source of our happiness and unhappiness in life. So, how well does Stoicism match up with what we know about the brain? If Stoic ideas have any validity, they should be confirmed by modern psychology and cognitive science.

There are many different therapies in the practice of psychology, including everything from traditional Freudian psychotherapy to acceptance and commitment therapy. One of the most effective and widely used treatments is known as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy or CBT.

CBT is used in the treatment of anxiety, mood disorders, eating disorders, depression, gambling addiction, substance abuse, and many other common problems. Studies have shown it to be one of the most effective and practical types of therapy, and it is considered the preferred treatment for a wide range of cognitive and behavioral issues. Studies have shown it to be just as effective as medication in some cases, making it the ideal option for people who want to address their problems without medication if possible.

Although CBT is a treatment method rather than a philosophy, the core ideas of this therapy are based on ancient Stoicism. Practicing Stoicism is not the same thing as receiving treatment in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy from a qualified professional, and receiving CBT treatment won't make you a philosopher. The two are distinct. Nevertheless, the tools CBT therapists use are based on the insights of Epictetus, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius—a powerful argument

for the validity of the Stoic worldview.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is a broad term, encompassing several different methods. Cognitive Emotional Behavioral Therapy, Structured Cognitive Behavioral Training, Moral Recognition Therapy, Stress Inoculation Training, Unified Protocol, Mindfulness-based Cognitive Behavioral Hypnotherapy, and Brief Cognitive Behavioral Therapy are all types of CBT.

All these therapies have slightly different theories and techniques, and some incorporate other influences along with Stoicism. For instance, Mindfulness-based Cognitive Behavioral Hypnotherapy incorporates some ideas from Buddhism. However, the basic insights and assumptions of CBT are shared by all the variations, and all of them share the same roots in ancient Stoicism.

Development of CBT

Cognitive Therapy was developed in the 1960s by a psychoanalyst named Aaron Beck, who felt that traditional psychotherapy was too focused on the unconscious to be practical for most patients.

Beck's reading of the Stoics had convinced him that psychological problems are often influenced by how people think and what they believe about the world. This matches several passages in the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius, where the emperor reminds himself that our beliefs and opinions are the prime cause of all our actions.

According to Beck, negative feelings and behaviors are often the direct consequence of negative beliefs and thoughts. He wanted to help patients recognize distorted thought patterns so that they could transform them over time into more positive and functional thought patterns. Beck believed that this would naturally lead to a decrease in dysfunctional behaviors, making Cognitive Therapy an effective treatment for substance abuse and other behavioral problems.

Cognitive Therapy is based on Beck's Cognitive Model, which divides human thought into three categories: automatic thoughts, intermediate beliefs, and core beliefs. Automatic thoughts are involuntary negative reactions based on the patient's underlying beliefs about the self, other people, or the future.

For example, a person suffering from an eating disorder might have a feeling of revulsion and self-hatred when looking in a mirror,

imagining herself to be much heavier than she really is. Automatic thoughts derive from intermediate beliefs in an “if-then” pattern, for example, “if I lose enough weight, I’ll finally be popular.” Intermediate beliefs derive from core beliefs such as, “nobody likes me.” By tracing the automatic thought all the way back to the core belief that ultimately inspired it, it becomes clear that this patient’s eating disorder is based in a deep belief that she is unlikeable and that treating this belief is key to treating the behavior.

In Cognitive Therapy, the therapist helps the patient learn to recognize automatic thoughts, then identifies the intermediate and core beliefs driving automatic thoughts. By asking a series of questions (a method borrowed from Socrates), the therapist demonstrates the irrational nature of these beliefs. Finally, the therapist helps the patient understand that these beliefs and automatic thoughts are distorted and inaccurate.

This process mirrors the Stoic approach to cognition, in which automatic reactions or “impressions” are subjected to questioning and only “assented to” if they seem rational by Stoic standards. Essentially, the Cognitive Therapist teaches the patient to question his impressions and assent only to those who turn out to be rational after close examination. Epictetus would certainly approve.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy takes the basic idea of Cognitive Therapy and adds additional techniques from Behaviorism, especially the use of desensitization and conditioning techniques to help patients overcome neuroses such as phobias. The Cognitive aspect of CBT is the aspect most heavily influenced by Stoic philosophy, but the Behaviorist aspect has proven to be very helpful for patients suffering from deep underlying fears and compulsions.

Thoughts, Emotions, and Actions

In the CBT model of how the mind works, thoughts influence emotions, and emotions influence actions or behaviors. Our actions confirm our thoughts about the world, and the cycle then repeats itself.

Attribution: Urstadt at English Wikipedia, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.

For example, you might think that you can’t relax and destress without some wine. This thought leads you to feel stressed out and

tense until you do drink some wine, at which point, you feel a little bit more relaxed. The next time you have the same thought, you're more likely to act on it because your experience of drinking the wine confirmed the validity of the thought. Of course, drinking too much wine causes other problems over time, but it's hard to break out of the loop because the connection between thought, feeling, and action seems so convincing. Even if you suspect that drinking too much is ultimately causing you much more stress, it's hard for you to accept that it won't help you right now.

At a deeper level, CBT holds that our core beliefs drive our thoughts. As in Cognitive Therapy, core beliefs are divided into three categories: beliefs about the self, beliefs about other people, and beliefs about the world. For example, the thought that it is not possible to relax without wine might be driven by core beliefs that the world is a threatening and stressful place, that other people cannot or will not offer emotional support, and that you can't rely on anyone except yourself when you feel overwhelmed. Not knowing any other ways to relax effectively, you then convince yourself that drinking wine is the only realistic option.

This is only a simplified version of how CBT works, but the connection to Stoicism is easy to see. Epictetus would certainly agree that our core beliefs about the world inform our opinions about specific situations, generating negative emotions or paths, such as fear, and finally leading us to make unhealthy decisions. Stoicism and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy share the same basic and practical assumption that our actions are driven mostly by what we believe about the world, and the most effective way to make positive changes in our life is to change what we believe. However, CBT does not focus on the central doctrine of Stoicism that all cognitive distortions ultimately come from the same source.

Cognitive Distortions

The main difference between the Stoic approach and the CBT approach is in the definition of what makes a thought "distorted" or unhelpful. In classical Stoicism, defining anything outside your own control as "good" or "bad" is a cognitive distortion. This is the basic error the Stoic wants to avoid. In CBT, there are four types of cognitive distortion: catastrophizing, overgeneralizing, minimizing positives, and maximizing negatives.

Catastrophizing is a type of if-then thinking in which the worst-case scenario is assumed to be true without any evidence. For example, “if I don’t keep my house spotlessly clean, I’ll catch a disease and die,” or “if I don’t get this report perfect, I’ll be fired, and my career will be ruined.”

Overgeneralizing is drawing a sweeping conclusion without enough evidence to support the conclusion. For example, if you go to a party, and no one talks to you, it would be an overgeneralization to assume that no one ever likes you or wants to talk to you. Your experience at a single party just isn’t enough evidence for the generalization.

Minimizing positives is the habit of disregarding any evidence that things are going well for you. For instance, you might tell yourself that your new promotion doesn’t matter because you’ll just be overwhelmed with stress and mess things up.

Maximizing negatives is the habit of focusing too much on whatever is difficult or challenging in your life. For example, you might tell yourself you’re all alone because you don’t have a girlfriend, ignoring the fact that you have several close friends.

The four cognitive distortions of CBT do show some influence from Stoicism. Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus both warn us not to indulge in any “what if” thinking but to stick to the basic facts about the situation. It’s not harmful to say, “my mother is sick,” but it is harmful to say, “my mother is sick; what if she dies?” Avoiding “what if” thinking prevents catastrophizing.

Sticking to the facts is also a good defense against overgeneralizing. “I went to the party, and no one talked to me” is just a fact, with no value judgment attached to it. “I went to the party, and no one talked to me because no one ever wants to talk to me” is an overgeneralization. By just not adding anything to factual account, you can avoid this type of cognitive distortion.

The other two types of cognitive distortion are a bit more distant from Stoic thought because a Stoic would never admit that any external event could be positive or negative in the first place. Minimizing positives would just be “minimizing preferred indifferents,” and maximizing negatives would just be “maximizing dispreferred indifferents.” The Stoic way of thinking about life doesn’t grant any true importance to either one.

That's the difference between Stoicism as a philosophy and CBT as a therapy. To practice Stoicism, you have to accept Stoic teachings about what really matters and what does not. Without accepting that virtue is the only good, it would be hard to practice Stoicism. To benefit from CBT, you don't have to accept any particular belief. You just have to be willing to question your existing beliefs with the therapist's help and guidance.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is a practical application of Stoic insights for people who don't necessarily know anything about Stoicism.

Stages of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy begins with an assessment, in which the therapist attempts to determine which critical behaviors are having an effect on the client's life. Next, the therapist decides whether these behaviors are excessive or deficient—too much or too little for the real situation. The therapist finds out how often the behavior is happening, how long it usually lasts, and how intense it is. This becomes the baseline, and the goal of the therapy is then to increase or reduce the frequency of the behavior based on the circumstances.

For example, the behavior might be excessive handwashing, a typical compulsive symptom. The therapist would find out how often the client washes his hands and how much time he spends doing so. The goal of therapy would be to reduce the frequency and duration of the behavior, so it stops causing problems in the client's life.

The next phase in CBT is reconceptualization, where the client is encouraged to think about his problem differently. This phase is similar to the Stoic approach because it's based on changing the client's beliefs about the world.

This phase is followed by skill acquisition, where the patient practices specific exercises to help him modify the behavior. Once these skills are consolidated, the therapist helps the patient generalize what he has learned in therapy. By learning how to spot the four basic cognitive distortions, the patient is given the tools to become his own therapist in the future.

That doesn't mean it's all smooth sailing from this point forward. Patients typically need some follow-up sessions to make sure they

haven't slipped back into old ways of thinking.

Stoicism in Positive Psychology

Of course, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy only supports Stoicism to a limited extent because the creators of CBT didn't incorporate every aspect of Stoicism into the practical therapies they were designing. The success of CBT suggests that Stoicism is right about a few key points, especially that our happiness or unhappiness is largely determined by our beliefs.

However, CBT's effectiveness cannot be interpreted as evidence for Stoicism's most important assertions. For that, psychologists would need to test Stoicism itself, not a therapy derived from Stoicism. The purpose of therapy is to correct a disorder, but the goal of philosophy like Stoicism is to achieve well-being and happiness. This is the domain of positive psychology, a movement to redirect psychology away from the exclusive study of psychological disorders and toward the study of human well-being. Some researchers in this field have decided to test whether Stoicism can live up to its claims and improve people's lives.

In 2013, Professor Christopher Gill of the University of Exeter conducted a research study on the benefits of Stoicism with Tim LeBon of the Modern Stoicism website. The goal of the study was to determine whether Stoic training would help participants experience more life satisfaction and more positive emotions.

Participants in the study were taught the basics of Stoic practice and assigned a set of daily exercises. Exercises included a morning meditation on Stoic principles, daily study of Stoic principles and techniques, a Stoic worksheet, and evening meditation on things done well and poorly during the day. All these exercises were based on specific passages in the Stoic classics.

Some of the participants were recruited from existing Stoic discussion groups, and others were recruited from the public at large. The study lasted for a single week, after which participants were asked a series of questions to determine what effect a one-week training course in Stoicism had on their daily lives.

At the end of the week, the amount of life satisfaction reported by participants had increased by 14%. The frequency/intensity of negative emotion was down by 11%, and the frequency/intensity of positive emotion was up by 9%. Feelings of optimism were up by

18%, and 56% of participants described themselves as having behaved more ethically than usual. These are significant improvements for a study that lasted for just a single week, providing strong scientific support for Stoicism as a path toward increased well-being, happiness, and virtue.

Resilience and Fortitude

Fear is another prominent driving emotion behind most of our decisions. You find people who work themselves to the bones because they are afraid of not being able to afford the things they want. They sometimes live a stagnant and unprogressive life, deliberately avoiding risks that would propel them forward, even if those risks are supported by their rational thinking or wisdom.

This virtue grants the ability to act on the wisdom you have discerned, even if it is not exactly conventional. Wisdom is fantastic, but without the application of wisdom, it is just another nice thing something thought or said. This virtue is also likened to endurance. But in that sad, long-suffering way that makes you a victim of circumstance. But in an emboldened form that sees you facing down your deepest fears and not acting on them. Rather, you push past it to think and act logically. You can say fortitude is wisdom applied in adversity.

Stoicism on mortality and the Key to Living Fully

Again, this is an area where we have issues with the direct translation of the word. When you hear justice, you may think this refers to the legal sense of the word, but that definition is simply not enough to encapsulate the true Stoic reference of this virtue. While an aspect of this virtue implies a state where we are obedient to the laws of the land, it goes much deeper than this.

Morality, on the other hand, does not fully encompass the stoic meaning of the word, either. In this instance, we are talking about doing right or, as some people would like to say, living an upright life. If you are the religious sort, you may go as far as calling it righteousness. However, between morality and justice, we can understand what this virtue is about.

In practical terms, justice or morality is the application of wisdom in social interactions. We've established that wisdom is the knowledge of good and bad, and the ability to clearly distinguish

between both. It is one thing to know something, it is another thing to act on it. In your dealings with people, justice/morality refers to the wisdom you apply in relating to them. Your respect and treatment of others are not based on their status, gender, or the benefits they offer. Rather, you make a deliberate choice to be fair and impartial.

Chapter 30. Mind Decluttering

These days, there are so many topics that your mind can be focused on. You constantly get alerts on your phone. There's always more work to do. There are places to be, people to see, and a never-ending list of tasks to accomplish. However, it's important to learn how to focus. This way, you will be able to place your attention on the task at hand and give your all to it. You may often find yourself caught up in what's coming next or dwelling on the past. However, you must be able to train your brain to focus on what needs your attention the most.

You must learn to declutter your mind, removing all of your unnecessary thoughts to make room for the most important thoughts. Practicing minimalism in your life can really help you to focus on what matters the most to you and what it is that you truly value in life. You must, of course, learn how to focus. There are a few ways to do this and make it easier for yourself to focus your attention properly. Finally, you can make focusing easier by prioritizing your tasks. Determine what you want to focus on, and put it in writing so that you have a visual representation of your most important tasks. By doing so, you will be able to start focusing and stop being so overwhelmed by all of your thoughts.

Decluttering Your Mind

You must declutter your mind; it is essential to your mental health, productivity, and ability to concentrate. If you have a cluttered mind, you may struggle to sleep at night. You won't be able to focus on work. It will be difficult to enjoy your life when you are weighed down with countless thoughts and filled with worries. There are a few ways that you can work on decluttering your mind.

One way to declutter your mind is to declutter your physical space. You may be mentally overwhelmed because of the physical environment that you are in. If your workspace is unorganized and filled with junk, your mind will reflect that; you won't be able to focus on your work. For this reason, it's necessary to go through your space and get rid of anything that you don't need. This will allow you to focus on what's important. Your home, workspace, and car will all influence your mental health. Put yourself in an

Minimalism

Minimalism, typically regarded as an intense trend, is actually quite helpful for those who wish to focus more clearly. Although there are some that take this to the extreme and live out of a suitcase and choose to not have a home or car, minimalism is a practice of being more mindful of what you choose to keep in your life. It can be applied across your life to help you to only have what matters to you in your life. You may find yourself practicing minimalism in one area of your life, only to have that affect other areas of your life.

Minimalism isn't simply getting rid of things or decluttering your belongings. It is seeing what truly matters to you and sticking with that. Marie Kondo's method is to only keep items that "spark joy." This means that you only keep the items in your life that truly make you happy. It can really help you to go through each item that you own and decide what matters to you. You may have some things that you keep out of guilt or for "someday in the future." However, these items will only disappoint and frustrate you each time you see them. It is important to eliminate any items that bring you negativity or remind you of failure. Surround yourself with items that bring you joy and make you a better person. Your surroundings should be a reflection of you and what you love. You may choose to go through the items in your house, at work, in your car, and any other places that you may have. Do not bring any other items into your life that bring you down in any way; only own what you truly need to make you happy. This can help you to have a much clearer mind.

Additionally, you may practice digital minimalism. You may feel overwhelmed with the amount of information that you have coming in. There will constantly be e-mails, texts, and other notifications. Social media can also be quite overwhelming. Delete any apps that you don't use or that you don't find happiness from. Get rid of that educational app that you "should" be using but never do. Get rid of those storage-sucking apps that you don't like. Clean up your phone. Turn off notifications that you don't need. You may go through your e-mails and delete all the ones you don't need. Unsubscribe from e-mails. Create a labeling system. For social media, unfollow those who don't have a positive effect on your life. You may even choose to stop using social media or go on a social

media detox. Limit yourself to a certain amount of time for social media. There is so much information that comes from social media, and much of it is unnecessary. Make sure that you are spending your time the way you want to be spending it.

Learning to Focus

Take some time to reflect on where you stand with your focus. Are you happy with your ability to focus? Do you wish that your focus could be improved? Figure out what your goal is. Do you find yourself getting distracted easily, unable to continue work after taking a break, or simply can't finish tasks with ease? Determine what it is that prevents you from focusing.

You may try to challenge yourself. Give yourself a task and a time limit and do your best. Become aware of how often you become distracted and how easily you can regain your focus. Write down anything that distracts you; you may not even realize how distracted you become! Afterward, ensure that you rid yourself of any distractions. Turn off your notifications. Make sure that it's quiet and peaceful. Whatever distracts you, make sure it's eliminated. You may also come up with a schedule for your breaks. Figure out what works best for you. Perhaps you like to work for fifty minutes and take a ten-minute break. Perhaps you prefer to work longer and have a longer break. It will depend on your personal preference. Regardless, it's important to remain completely focused while you are working and to also take breaks regularly. This will increase your productivity and allow you to be less stressed. Determine what sets you off. What is it that makes you lose your focus? Why do you overthink? Reflecting can really help you to determine the causes of your actions.

There are a few ways that you may work on your focus. Meditating can really help you to be calm and live in the moment. You will learn how to become a master of your mind. This can really help if you feel overwhelmed by your thoughts. Although meditation can seem difficult (and even frustrating) at first, it provides you with a great boost to your mental health, ability to concentrate, and overall emotional well-being. Another way to help you to focus is by doing some physical activity. Taking a quick walk can help to get your blood flowing, ease up tension, and wake you up. It can be quite refreshing to get moving, even if you simply take a moment to stretch. Remaining active can also help improve your physical

health, which affects your mental health. This is why keeping your physical health in check is so important. Getting the proper amount of sleep, consuming the right foods, and drinking enough water every day is crucial. You will not only feel better, but you will also be able to focus much better.

Overall, it's important to take care of your mental health so that you can focus better. By taking some time to yourself and doing small things that you love, you can really help yourself to feel better. When you are happy, you will feel much more motivated and find it much easier to focus.

Prioritizing

Perhaps you are able to focus, but you simply aren't focusing on what you should. It can be quite easy to get caught up in tasks that are unimportant or aren't urgent. You may think that you're being productive, but you're really procrastinating. This is why prioritizing is so important. You must be able to recognize where you should be placing your focus. Otherwise, it's like you're on a treadmill. You're still getting something done, but you aren't actually going anywhere. You must learn to prioritize your tasks properly so that you focus first on what's important. After that, you may move on to other tasks.

One way to prioritize is by making to-do lists every day. It is helpful to make them the night before so that you can plan ahead of time. At the moment, you may not feel as motivated to accomplish every task. It helps to have one to three major tasks for the day. These are your top tasks. Even if they are the only things you accomplish for the day, you would be happy with yourself. These are your top priority, and it is what you should focus on accomplishing first. This will allow you to focus on what you must.

You should also write down any additional goals that you have for the day. Write every possible thing that is on your mind. Make a list of all of the potential tasks, even if they aren't necessary for the day. By doing a "brain dump," you are freeing yourself of clutter in your mind. This will really help you to focus on the present instead of the past or future. Additionally, you will feel better knowing that you won't forget anything that you would like to do. It will all be written down, so you can feel more at peace.

--

Brain Dump
Need to do progress towards completing a project, go grocery shopping, go to the bank, clean kitchen, take the dog to the groomer, do laundry and wash sheets, go to the gym, talk to sister about dinner, schedule dentist appointment, etc.

You may also consider journaling to help you figure out what matters. Each day, you may reflect on your day. Determine what your strengths and weaknesses for that day were. How was your focus? Did you accomplish everything? This will also help you to determine how you can improve for the next day. Although it will take time to become better at focusing, you may practice and improve your skills every day. Eventually, you will naturally prioritize your tasks and focus. Until then, you must make a conscious effort to do so.

Prioritizing your tasks will allow you to accomplish what is urgent and important first. Tasks with deadlines or of greater importance will be completed first. By doing this, you are allowing yourself to not feel guilty, as you will complete what you must before moving onto less urgent and less important activities. You can even reward yourself with some fun after completing your daily tasks. When you procrastinate, you are clouding your focus and delaying the completion of important tasks. You are hindering your performance and missing out on opportunities. When you learn how to focus, you will feel much better and will reduce your overthinking tendencies.

It's very important to learn how to focus. You are likely overwhelmed with all of the information that you receive, all of the tasks that you must complete, and all of the thoughts in your head. Each day brings new surprises and new information with it. It's important to be able to have a filter on it to allow yourself to focus on what you must. Otherwise, you will constantly feel anxious, stress, and overwhelmed by all of the thoughts in your head. This will lead to overthinking, as you will think about the potential tasks to complete and won't have a plan for it. As a result, you won't be able to enjoy the present moment because you are so focused on your past failures and worried about making future mistakes. However, learning to focus can really help you.

Decluttering your mind will help you to remove all of your

unnecessary thoughts. You will learn how to focus on what matters so that you may direct your energy towards that. Similarly, practicing minimalism will help you to understand what you value in life. You will realize what you should put your focus on, and what you find important. You can learn to focus by means of a few methods. Physical and mental health will play a huge role in your ability to focus. Finally, prioritizing will help you to learn what you should focus your attention on. You will feel more at ease when you can focus on what you need to.

Chapter 31. How to Get More Productivity

How to stay on track

Visualize goals. Say your goal is to give a sales presentation in 10 days' time to an important client. Winning this client's business would be an important achievement for your company and give your career a huge boost. Now, visualize yourself giving the presentation. You are speaking with ease, confidence and passion. The client and his team are listening intently and nodding their heads. You can see that they are impressed and very interested. You finish your presentation and answer any questions articulately and knowledgeably. The client is sold and you set a date to discuss details. By visualizing your goal over and over again in this way, can you see what you are doing? You are training your mind to think positively about the future without worry, anxiety or fear - and this positivity will be reflected in your behavior.

Make a vision board: One of the most effective and enjoyable ways to visualize goals is to make a vision board. Originally, it is used for manifesting your desires through the Law of Attraction but that's another topic altogether! For our purpose, it can be used as a powerful way to train your mind to visualize goals and make them more tangible. Looking at your vision board daily will send a clear and consistent message to your brain that these goals are relevant to you and that they make you feel happy and optimistic.

You can make your vision board by investing in a small bulletin board or a sheet of colored cardboard. Look through magazines to find pictures that reflect your goal and that resonate with you and inspire you.

For example, if your goal is to get healthy, find pictures of beautiful, fit and happy people that you aspire to look like when you lose weight. If your goal is a better relationship with your partner or becoming a better parent, choose pictures of happy couples in romantic settings or families having fun together.

If your goal is to have a bigger nicer house, collect pictures of houses that you love, and even furniture that you would love to one day have in your home, and so on.

Hang the vision board on your bedroom wall, fridge or wherever you will be able to see it as frequently as possible. Spend a few minutes each day looking at it and visualizing your goal to keep them always in your mind and to keep yourself motivated.

Great tip: I made my own vision board a bit differently. I collected photos from online and used Windows Moviemaker to create a slide show accompanied by relaxing music. It didn't cost a penny and whenever I want to visualize my goals, I simply sit down at my computer and run the slide show. It is a totally relaxing and enjoyable experience that really boot my mood. Just make sure that the intervals between slides is long enough for you to savor and enjoy them. I love my slide show vision board and look forward to the times I schedule to visualize my goals.

Practice guided meditation. YouTube has dozens of guided meditations related to goal-setting. Type "Guided meditation for visualizing goals" and take your pick. This is a wonderful way to relax and focus on your goal at the same time.

Have an "if-then" plan

Let's face it; there are times when you will come up against obstacles because sometimes, life just gets in the way. In the 1990s, some very remarkable research was done at New York University by psychology professor Dr. Peter Gollwitzer. This fascinating study revolved around overcoming obstacles by creating an "if-then" contingency plan.

He found that participants in the study were more likely to achieve goals when they planned ahead, and had a strategy for what do if things went wrong. For example: "if I fail the test, then I will get tutoring, study harder and pass the next time". Or, say your goal to lose 5 lbs. includes not eating dessert and having a piece of fruits instead. But the Christmas holidays are coming up and you know you might be tempted to indulge in delicious Christmas cake and cookies. In this case, your plan would be "If I get tempted and eat dessert then I will exercise an extra day a week for one week".

And in the worst case scenario, if you fail completely in achieving a goal then your plan could be, "If I fail this time then I will learn from my mistakes, chalk it up to experience and start over".

Why is an if-then plan important?

First and foremost, it prevents the negative and crippling self-talk we tell ourselves when something goes wrong; "I'm hopeless! I never stick to anything. I'm a failure. I'm a loser... I give up!"

It trains the brain to create a link between the potential situation, "if", and the behavior or reaction to the situation, "then". It protects you from feelings of failure because it provides an option.

The psychological term for this plan is "implementation intentions". It is the subconscious intention and behavior regulation such plans create in the brain that makes them so effective for achieving goals.

An effective if-then plan should include:

A specific response for how you will deal with obstacles to a specific goal.

Identify triggers that could cause issues. For example, if your goal is to save \$1000 in 5 months but have a weakness for expensive shoes, try to avoid shoe stores until you have reached your goal.

Learn from your failures to refine your plan. For example, certain situations you need to avoid in the future or unexpected triggers

Don't beat yourself up when setbacks happen, as they ultimately will. Stay positive and optimistic and remind yourself that failure is part of life.

Additional tips for effective goal setting

When writing down your goals, express them in positive words. "I will save \$100 dollars this month by not eating out and enjoying delicious home-cooked meals instead". This is a nice positive statement. What you should not say is "I will not be stupid and waste money eating out" or "I will achieve my goal without making stupid mistakes".

As much as possible, be precise and set specific dates if you can.

Set priorities. If you have several goals, it's always best to set priorities and work on one at a time.

Reward yourself! Once you achieve a goal, generate more positivity in your mind by taking the time to savor your success and give yourself a big pat on the back. Allow your mind to absorb the achievement and how much satisfaction and joy it gives you. And once you have done that, it's time to move on to your next goal!

Chapter 32. The Pitfalls Of Overthinking

The process of rewiring your mind requires that you avoid negative influences, to keep your mind fresh and relaxed for optimal rewiring results. One of the biggest negative influences that can obstruct your progress is overthinking.

Overthinking is different from thinking things through. Some certain decisions or actions need to be thought through very carefully – in fact, not thinking them through could have hazardous outcomes. For example, say your company offers you the position of heading a new regional office, which would require you and your family to relocate overseas for three years. That is the kind of decision that requires hours, if not days of pondering, and this is perfectly healthy and desirable.

But spending 10 minutes trying to decide what to have for breakfast, which ties to wear, or spending hours comparing goods before making a purchase is, in the larger scheme of things, pretty trivial and a waste of time. Overthinking also includes running past conversations or encounters in our heads over and over again, and looking for hidden signs or meanings, or thinking that we should have said this rather than that. It also includes envisioning future scenarios, all the things that could go wrong, what you should say in case of this or that... in short, overloading your mind with useless thoughts that have no logical basis. You can't go back and redo what has happened, nor will worrying or overanalyzing gives you the ability to control what happens in the future.

Keep in mind this simple equation: Overthinking leads to worry. Worry leads to stress. Stress causes a stress response and panic attacks. Moreover, overthinking can lead to crippling uncertainty, where you are unable to decide on even the simplest thing, and you lose control over your life.

You are overthinking leads to two types of destructive thought patterns: ruminating and worrying.

1) Ruminating involves rehashing things over and over again, thinking:

"I shouldn't have said that; that made me look really bad..."

"Maybe If I'd dressed more conservatively, I'd have gotten the job."

"I should have done this instead. Now I've blown my chances..."

"I wasn't clear enough. He/ she probably misunderstood what I meant..."

"That email wasn't phrased well. I should have mentioned..."

No further explanation is needed here. It's pretty clear that this thought pattern is extremely detrimental to anyone who gets caught up in it. Also, it's usually not accompanied by positive self-talk like, "We all make mistakes, I'll make sure not to do that again in a similar situation."

2) Worrying is a form of overthinking where your mind leaps ahead and imagines failures or disastrous outcomes to things that haven't happened yet, such as:

"I haven't studied well enough. What if I fail the exam? I won't be able to graduate this year..."

"The weather's bad, and it's getting dark. I'm worried my spouse will have an accident driving home..."

"My doctor says the surgery is simple and safe, but what if I have complications? What if they get worse and I die? "

Worrying and ruminating are two thought patterns that bombard your brain with a constant stream of unhealthy and unproductive thoughts. If left unchecked, you will be dragged into a vicious cycle that will eat away at your very sanity.

Some pitfalls of overthinking

Impairs judgment because it keeps your brain in a constant fog of fear and indecision.

Elevates stress levels.

Creates chronic indecision which can totally destroy self-confidence over time, and cause depression.

Burns up mental and physical energy to the point where you can either get physically sick or develop a mental disorder.

Leads you to mistrust feeling happy.

Stress Response and panic attacks are a direct outcome of overthinking

The stress response is also known as the "fear and flight" response. It is vital for our safety in times of real danger, such as a shooting, God forbid, or some other violent situation. The stress response releases certain hormones in our body (including the well-known adrenalin rush) that trigger a heightened pulse and heart rate, dilated pupils, shaking, and intense fear and alertness. Having a stress response when there is no real danger can really wreak havoc on your mind and body.

A panic attack triggers the same response when constant anxiety builds up.

Stress response or panic attack is followed by what is called the "relaxation response" when your body calms down, and its functions return to normal. This commonly takes between 20 to 30 minutes. Every time you have a stress response or panic attack, you are pushing your mind and body to extremes that, over time, will take their toll on your health. It's no surprise that stress is the number one cause of high blood pressure, stroke, heart disease, diabetes, and many other serious illnesses. This alone should be a huge motivator for rewiring the mind.

12 Tips for Rewiring your mind to stop overthinking

Overthinking is a habit, and as we have learned, habits are hard to break because you have to train your mind to abandon the old neural pathways and create new ones. Again, constant practice is the key here. Use the following tips help rewire your mind for overthinking:

Catch yourself doing it:

Be on the lookout! When you find yourself overthinking, stop immediately. Go and do something else that will divert your focus; solve a crossword puzzle, meditate, do yoga, or read a few pages of a book. Choose an activity that will allow your brain to stay focused on the task at hand and not start to wander again to that phone call you had last week or the meeting with your boss next week.

Schedule time for thinking and decision-making:

Write down any problems you need to solve or the decisions you need to make. Schedule a specific time to sit down and think calmly and reasonably. Stay alert. If you catch yourself overthinking, stop yourself immediately.

Set deadlines for making decisions and stick to them:

Depending on the issue, you can allow yourself 10 minutes, half an hour or an hour. Be firm with yourself and stick to the deadline. For example, you've been asked to coordinate a bake sale for your local church. Realistically, you would need no more than 5 minutes to review your schedule, decide if you would enjoy doing it and reply with a yes or no. On the other hand, if your boss offers you a promotion which would mean more money but longer working hours, you may need more to weigh all the options and decide if it worth it. You may even need to sleep on and see if you still feel the same way the next day.

Practice mindfulness:

We will discuss mindfulness skills in another chapter because they are crucial tools to keep your mind focused on the present, rather than overthinking about the past or the future

Accept that you are doing your best:

Affirm to yourself that you have always done your best in past situations and will do your best in the future. Tell yourself that yes, you have made mistakes, but on the whole, you always manage to do pretty well.

Don't expect perfection:

Perfection in anything is very rare, so it's unreasonable to expect things to go exactly the way we want. It's good to be ambitious and strive for the best but not to fret or worry over outcomes that are less than perfect.

Don't personalize:

Not everything that happens in your life is necessarily about you. If your boss returns your "good morning" with a grumpy "Hi," don't run to your office and start pulling your hair out thinking he's planning to fire you. Maybe he has family issues or is going through a personal crisis that has nothing to do with you at all. The clerk at the store who is a little short with you may not be feeling well. Taking everything personally leads to feelings of victimhood, which are very unhealthy. It also makes you insensitive to other people's feelings and circumstances so that you appear selfish and unkind. This is why empathy is an important quality to develop through meditation, as we will see later.

Challenge your fears:

Just because something didn't work out in the past doesn't mean you're doomed to failure forever. Every new beginning is a new chance to succeed and to shine. Confront and challenge your fears using the neuroplasticity process discussed earlier: acknowledge, confront, challenge, and change. Train your brain to see every new beginning as an opportunity, a new adventure that you are excited about and eager to experience.

Think of what can go right:

Overthinking is triggered by fear. If you do need to think something out and find yourself going off on a negative tangent, rewire your mind by challenging the thought and then thinking of all the things that could go right. Visualize yourself in that situation and how you would feel. Start to create a new and positive neural pathway.

Put things into perspective:

Shut down overthinking by asking yourself how much a particular issue will really matter in two years, six months, a month, and so on. Changing time frames puts the issue into perspective and helps you realize that its overall impact on your life will not be devastating. This will shift your outlook and make you feel more positive

Get enough sleep:

A good night's sleep is the best "brain balancer" there is. A well-rested mind and body is the magic charm that helps us think calmly, weight options realistically, and see things in perspective. A jittery and sleep-starved brain is more prone to overthinking, anxiety, and worry.

Be grateful:

Each night before you go to bed, make a mental list of all the positive things that have happened throughout the day and the things and people you are grateful for. Stop yourself if you start dwelling on the negative and think of someone you love, your partner or your child, and how grateful you are to have them in your life. Be grateful that they are happy and healthy and that they give you so much joy. You will find that next to that, anything else really is pretty insignificant. This exercise will help you drift off to sleep with nothing but positive, loving thoughts in your head.

What science tells us about overthinking?

Overthinking is a result of growing older and becoming more cynical and disillusioned about life. Scientists have found that when we lose our childhood curiosity and wonder, we become more prone to worrying and overthinking. To a child, everything is wondrous and new; life is a great adventure waiting to be explored, and each new discovery is more wonderful than the last. A child's brain makes billions of positive connections when that child is at the peak of curiosity.

We can regain some of those childhood qualities by observing children at play, playing with our own children or grandchildren, and relearning to see the world through their eyes. What a fun and easy way to rewire our brain with optimism and joy!

Chapter 33. Concentration Power

What is concentration? It is about taking your mind off many things but putting such things on one at a time. Concentration always has something to do with your mind or mental skills that involve memory and attention.

Usually, many of our actions are performed automatically. That is why focusing attention is indeed an effortful one. As you age, the brain needs more time to process information. With the speed of processing, the other functionalities of your brain decline, in which focusing or ignoring distraction is a crucial one.

You know the fact that people who have acquired much of their age tend to have problems or find it hard to pay attention to. However, focusing attention on your task can be best to improve your memory performance. Lack of attention, particularly concentration, is one of the common problems that most people face nowadays. How can this be addressed?

Below are the ways on how to improve concentration more than you expected!

a) Take a rest. One great factor that affects concentration is rest. Remember that concentration requires your mind to be calm. If you are not well-rested, your mind would likely scatter, therefore resulting in you not to have the proper focus on a particular task. Getting enough and the right amount of sleep at the right time would definitely be your key step toward concentration.

b) Make a plan. Whatever you are up to, it is always better to have a plan to guide you to which task should be done first. Working without a plan in one sitting might get you caught in activities like browsing the web, checking emails, or even instant messaging. When this happens, you will just end up wasting your time, not knowing you have already missed accomplishing the supposedly should-be-done task. You need to have clear plans that will meet your needs beforehand. Allotting 5 to 10 minutes on checking emails and other stuff is enough and then move to your most important task.

c) Help yourself to improve the flow of oxygen to the brain. Your

blood serves as the main vehicle of oxygen in your body, but if blood gets pooled in the lower half of your body and does not push enough oxygen to your brain, it affects your concentration. For you to help in oxygenating your brain, you need to get up and take a walk more often to get your blood pumping and so improve your concentration. If in case you are stuck at work, you can try doing exercise at work such as aerobic or isometric exercise.

d) Make sure that you are comfortable enough to work on things. You can start by ensuring that your desk and chair are at the right height for you to work comfortably. Having a chair that is too high or a desk that is too low might just give you discomfort, which gives you the tendency of just walking away and ignores the task you suppose to accomplish.

e) Give your brain a quick break. You can do it every 30 minutes or, at least, every hour. Whenever your brain is bound to have a consistent concentration for hours at a time, it suddenly loses processing power and concentration level slip. It is always better for you to space out your project and take some break or power naps in between to reboot concentration, keeping your brain humming at closer to 100% concentration.

f) Do not work on your bed, but at a desk. You know that your desk is where you do work and concentrate while your bed is where you sleep. Your mind has these sorts of subconscious associations, which seem you are already sending a sleep signal to your mind, whenever you opt to work on your bed. This results in asking yourself doing two things at once, which in the first place distract you from choosing between sleeping or continue concentrating on your work.

g) As much as possible, shut out distractions. It depends on you whether you find a place where no one has to disturb you. Listening to music, especially instrumental, is proven one of the great ways to calm and provide peace of mind. Some people would prefer using "white noise apps" that produce a ton- distracting and steady sound, such as falling rain or ocean waves. These sounds could drown out other noise, which helps you to focus better and ignore distractions.

Learn to meditate. Remember that meditation is considered as the most powerful of all the concentration enhancement techniques. It

will keep your mind free from stress, depression, and other stressors that affect your concentration. You need to learn at least a few meditation techniques and be able to practice them five minutes daily or more.

h) Drink lots of water. Most people would often do not think about drinking water while they are at work. But did you know that dehydration could make you feel tired, slow, irritable, or even sick? Once your brain does not receive enough fluid, it cannot operate at its peak performance. If you keep yourself hydrated, you are likely to improve your concentration throughout the day.

Chapter 34. Confidence and Self Esteem

There is a strong connection between confidence, emotional control, and the conquering of psychological habits. Over the years, through all of the surveys, interviews, and studies conducted, this is the most common and repeated truth from those participating in them and those performing them: no matter what a person is trying to attempt, confidence is key!

There are lots of different life factors that can affect a person's self-esteem and confidence, with adolescence taking the largest toll on a person's view of themselves. During adolescence, humans It is in these years that men and women receive the majority of their emotional education as it has the highest inclusion of factors like the following for most people:

- First romantic relationships (often tumultuous with lots of highs and lows)

- First deep friendships that are tested by adjusting hormones, changing personalities and other life factors that may arise without warning

- First major successes and accomplishments like national awards and recognition, college scholarships and summer internships

- Learning to drive and understanding the responsibility that comes with getting behind the wheel of a car

- Developing decision-making skills that are shaped by how adolescents handle things like peer pressure, balancing their school, work, and social lives, and making their first life-affecting decisions like if they want to further their education after their required schooling is completed

With all of these exciting changes taking place, how could someone's self-esteem and confidence levels be hindered or even damaged? Unfortunately, for all of the positive events men and women experience during their teenage years, there are also a lot of negative events and factors they face (in their highest quantity and intensity than most people see throughout the rest of their lives) such as:

Learning to differentiate affectionate teasing from friends and loved ones with harmful teasing and bullying that comes from those to cause harm

Physical changes to their skin, muscles and other parts of the body that may require attention from over-the-counter medical products or even prescriptions from medical professionals

Emotional changes that are often unexpected and out of control as skills are developed through experience and education

Lots of fear and uncertainty as everything seems to be changing around them without a sense of direction or stopping point insight

Not everyone has come out of adolescence with more negative memories than positive ones, but for those that did and find those negative experiences or memories affecting their adult lives, never fear! There is always action that can be taken to improve your self-esteem and confidence levels to improve your overall life satisfaction and path to reaching your goals!

Self-Esteem & Confidence Levels: How Are They Connected & How Are They Different?

Many times, when people talk about self-esteem and confidence, they speak about them as if they are one and the same. However, in truth, self-esteem and confidence are two separate personality traits that are often interconnected but can be damaged or weakened on their own and need individualized attention to help rebuild and strengthen them.

Pro Tip: Self-awareness is one of the skills people should try to master or at least become more familiar and practiced before turning their energies to self-esteem and confidence. Without knowing where you stand psychologically, mentally, and emotionally, it is difficult to determine where your focus should be aimed and what kinds of goals you should set to reach your ultimate hopes and aspirations.

A Self-Awareness Exercise: Listen to Your Self Talk & Learn from What You Say

One of the best ways for someone to understand their emotional status and why they are feeling a certain way about something is to listen to how they are speaking to themselves, either vocally or in their minds. Everyone has a little voice in their thoughts that voices

their opinions about what they are thinking or what they are doing honestly, even if sometimes it can be discouraging or even cruel. The reason this voice can be trusted as a person's most honest thoughts is because these are the thoughts, ideas, and opinions that only circle through someone's mind when they are alone (especially if they are voiced audibly) or whenever they have the opportunity (for those who play the voice in their minds where only they ever hear them).

Those with lower self-esteem and confidence levels often find that their private voice is a negative one, repeating Self Talk that further damages their view of themselves or opinion of their abilities. For this exercise, the goal is to teach individuals how to be more aware of this Self Talk and its tone so that they know how to change their current thought process or emotional status any time their Self Talk takes a negative turn.

When you feel yourself inner voice becoming negative, whether this is because you are unsatisfied with something about your physical appearance or because of a broken sentence in an earlier social interaction, it will start to make critical comments or try to target other fragile or underdeveloped aspects of your personality to bring your mood further down.

Self-depreciation and attacks on one's own status or abilities are some of the most damaging behaviors someone can take part in, and in many cases, this voice develops subconsciously, only voicing fears and concerns when the brain knows the person is emotionally vulnerable.

When this behavior starts to take over your thoughts, take a step back and calm your mind. Listen to those thoughts and how your inner voice sounds (or your vocal tone) when the Self Talk starts.

What kind of tone does your voice or inner voice take?

Is it angry, sad, or hurtful?

Does it express any kind of emotion, or does it come across as a more neutral side to your character?

What kind of words is that voice using?

Are they offensive?

Are the words you do not normally use when talking to other people?

When is this voice most active?

Does the Self Talk get most negative or most targeted during times of stress? Or any time you are not thinking about something else?

Do your own thoughts, actions, and behaviors determine how active the voice is? Or is it more active after encounters with others?

Why This Exercise Works?

This exercise works because it is based around a natural human behavior that all men and women have in common, an inner voice that takes charge of conveying our deepest and most private thoughts about the things we do and say each day. When regularly practiced, it has proven to be one of the most effective exercises in helping people expand their emotional intelligence and their understanding of themselves and how they view their private thoughts.

Whom This Exercise Works Best For?

This exercise has proven the most effective for those who are dedicated and motivated to take control of their emotional and psychological health. Anyone ready to better understand who they are and what makes them tick to improve their interactions with others or saying yes to more opportunities will also see noticeable progress when this exercise becomes a habit and makes its way into their daily routine.

Once a person becomes comfortable with self-awareness habits and has a better understanding of where their emotional health is, they are better able to make an actionable plan for how to first improve their self-esteem and confidence levels before moving on to more stubborn and difficult to break psychological habits like compulsive overthinking and procrastination. But what is self-esteem, and why is it such an important element to master when it comes to expanding emotional knowledge and health?

What Is Self-Esteem?

Self-esteem is most commonly defined as how a person feels about themselves as a whole. There is often an emotional connection to a person's self-esteem that is not shared with someone's confidence levels.

This trait is one that covers how an individual may feel about:

Their current life status

Their current job status

Their relationship status

Their main hopes and how they are working toward them

The people around them like friends and family

Their physical strengths and where they want to work more

These are just some of the individual factors and variables that can go into shaping a person's view of themselves and their self-esteem. If everyone in the world made a list of the points and traits they think about when they think about their view of themselves, you would most likely see a lot of repeated important factors. However, another certainty that many experts and professionals who study the effects of self-esteem on people are that there will also be as many differences as there are similarities. The reason for this is that everyone has different values or expectations for themselves based on an additional variety of factors such as:

The environment they were raised in

The family values instilled in them throughout childhood

Their personal beliefs and values that have developed throughout their individual life experiences

The expectations they set and the standards they hold themselves and those around them

These are just some of those additional factors that can help to shape an individual. The more in-depth someone looks into their own thoughts, feelings, ideas, hopes, and dreams, the more they will know about themselves, and the higher their self-esteem will grow to be.

Where It Comes From: A person's self-esteem is most commonly shaped by their emotional experiences and encounters. The mistakes, triumphs, accidents, and successes that come throughout life all carry their own emotional and psychological influences with them. It's these influences that are most powerful when it comes to shaping how a person views themselves and their current lifestyle or life situation. The more positive influences and experiences a person can collect, the better their self-esteem will be, and the more emotionally in control they will find themselves when stressful

situations arise.

What Is Confidence (or Self-Confidence)?

Confidence (particularly when described as self-confidence) refers to faith a person has in their own knowledge, experience, skills, and abilities. Depending on how much belief someone has in the things they know, the things they say, and the things they do during their personal or professional interactions, the higher a person's confidence levels will be.

Where It Comes From?

A person's confidence comes from their opinion of and trust in their own strengths and abilities. This trust and faith most often are the result of positive experiences such as promotions at work or awards at school. The more experience they have and proof they have been able to collect that they know what they are doing or what they are talking about, then the higher their self-confidence will be, and the more that will start to affect other areas of their life positively.

There are lots of people who have a high level of self-esteem but find that they lack confidence, especially in certain situations like when they are asked to do something without time to prepare or when they want to ask a question, but are concerned with how others will react to it, so they decide just to keep their hand down. Alternately, people may have high levels of self-confidence and belief in their personal abilities, but also have poor levels of self-esteem from having their heart broken in a failed relationship or from trust issues that developed after being double-crossed by a friend or a co-worker.

Why Are These Traits So Important for Men & Women to Embrace, Develop & Strengthen?

As different as they can be, there are also plenty of situations and experiences that can be caused by interconnected levels of self-esteem and confidence. The more understanding, experienced, and control a person has over their personal self-esteem and confidence levels, the better off they will be in all opportunities they attempt or goals they strive for throughout their life.

Strengthening these traits not only helps with improving a person's overall mental, psychological, and emotional health, but it also comes with a variety of other benefits that can help improve

someone's personal health and wellness in a wide range of styles.

The Many Benefits of Building Self-Esteem & Confidence

Even for those who are happy with their control over their habitual overthinking and procrastination, there are an endless number of reasons to keep focused on and motivated to work on for anyone and everyone building self-esteem and confidence levels. Here is a look at some of the most popular and widely reported benefits people have experienced in their quests for higher self-esteem and confidence!

Those with higher self-esteem and personal confidence are less likely to be people pleasers or develop people-pleasing habits than those with lower opinions of themselves or their abilities

They also tend to have better performance ratings and higher success rates in leadership roles

Not only are they more personable with customers or other audiences, but they are also more empathetic with employers or co-workers and better able to boost morale during times of high demand or increased stress levels

They are also more likely to have higher success rates with setting and reaching personal and professional goals because they are more self-aware of their mental, psychological, emotional changes and how it affects their daily performance

Those with higher self-esteem and confidence levels report more personal and professional satisfaction throughout their lives

They are more likely to take up opportunities when offered

They also tend to be bolder and more dominant in their professional teams and social circles as they are more likely to openly share their opinions and start conversations with even those they do not know with more confidence than those who question themselves and hesitate around others

These are just a handful of the benefits that study and research subjects of all ages and lifestyles have reported when tracked over time and throughout their personal improvement journey! Each person will find a whole new array of benefits and progress markers that are specialized and more tailored to their individual needs based on the techniques they choose to put into practice, how dedicated they can remain to their self-improvement plan and of

course, what specific issues and concerns that are working to improve or eliminate.

How to Get Started with Building Self-Esteem & Confidence Levels

Like with developing any new positive habits to replace the damaging negative ones, the first step to getting started revolves around a person's self-awareness of their thoughts and emotions. The first thing anyone should do when trying to build their self-confidence and self-esteem is to take a look at their points of strength and points of concern. The following is an example of a self-awareness exercise that many people have reported progress during their own quests for higher self-esteem.

A Self-Awareness Exercise: Get to Know Yourself & Your Restrictions

This self-awareness exercise is one of the most basic, one of the most widely used and one of the most effective, proven techniques for anyone trying to get a better idea of their personal highs and points where they may want to work on improving to make the most of their personal potential.

Set aside a time where you can clear your mind and focus on the concerns at hand

Make sure to deal with any potential distractions such as silencing your cell phone and turning off your television, perhaps even closing the door to the room you are going to be contemplating in so that you are not interrupted by anyone else in the building

Layout a clean piece of paper and get the kind of pens that you when working on organizational thinking

For some, they may just use a basic blue or black pen for anything they need to write, but when it comes to organization, some people prefer multiple colors or types of tips to choose from to separate different thoughts, ideas or options into color-coded or differently shaped areas

Make a list of your strengths

This can be emotional strengths like being able to remain calm in high-stress situations or always responding to friends and family the same day they message you

This can be professional strengths like mastering a certain skill or

getting recognition for something you accomplished in your department

This can be personal strengths like organization and discipline, anything that you take pride in and use regularly

Now flip the paper over or draw a line to separate your lists and make a list of your weaker points or skills that you want to develop and master

Again, these points can be emotional like a tendency to breakdown when challenges arise in your personal or professional life

They can be professional points of concern like wanting to be better at communicating with customers or being bolder when it comes to discussing a promotion with your employer

They can also be personal, like a bad habit snapping at people who speak to you early in the morning or late in the day

You do not have to make lists!

Some people find that this exercise works better when they form connecting circles of related thoughts or pie charts of strengths, weaknesses and action plans

The point is not to force your mind to start thinking in lists, but rather to find a way to organize your thoughts related to personal strengths, weaknesses, and goals for self-improvement.

Chapter 35. Relationships and Stress

Stress has become such a common phenomenon that it has crept into every aspect of life these days and relationships are also not an exception. Relationships are meant to be an anchor. They provide moral, social, and emotional support. We look towards them for help. However, these days, relationships need more help than anything else in the world.

Stress in relationships is very common. We can see stress at every stage of a relationship. Either it is the dating stage, try to remain committed or breaking apart from a relationship, stress is omnipresent.

Of all the other things, stress in relationships is a dangerous phenomenon because if it exceeds too much, the connecting fiber of the society would get endangered. Therefore, it is very important that you try to maintain healthy relationships. In case, remaining in a relationship is not very viable, breaking apart in an amicable way in a timely manner is also very important.

Relationships should never be taken lightly. Relationships are meant to compliment you. We cannot be everything at once and that's why we seek relationships to feel complete. They fill the void. Treating relationships in a frivolous manner is a serious mistake. You should take all the steps to make a relationship work as it takes time and energy to cultivate nourishing relationships.

The next three chapters will discuss the following:

1. Stress and anxiety in dating and the ways to lower it.
2. Things that lead to stress in relationships and the ways to deal with them.
3. Strategies to improve or eliminate bad relationships.

Understanding and Dealing with Anxiety in Dating

Entering into a new relationship is not a very easy thing. Two different individuals with unique personalities need to accept each other. They have to acknowledge each other's strengths and weaknesses and learn to live with them. Put aside some of the

differences in personalities and adapt. It is a fairly complicated procedure. Studies and age-old wisdom have taught that no amount of extended companionship can make two individuals one. Only those relationships survive the best that understand weaknesses of the partners and show inclusiveness. However, this is a learning process and takes time to develop. Dating is a completely different ballgame altogether. It is almost jumping into the pond without any idea of the depth.

Stress and anxiety in such cases are natural. Some people perfect their game with time and feel completely normal. Otherwise, stress and anxiety in dating are as common as yolk in an egg.

If you are worried about dating. Having the gut-wrenching feeling and developing the fight or flight response, then hold your horses a little bit more. You are not all alone in the boat.

It is Very Common

More than 18% of adult US population faces anxiety disorders. Roughly more than 15 million people are suffering from it. So, if you are feeling anxious, it is common. Even the people who are not suffering from any kind of anxiety disorder feel stressed, worried, and anxious about dates. There is no reason for you to not be alarmed. Getting to know, understand, and like a person is a big thing. It involves commitment, adjustments, and the works.

Most people think that throwing cheesy lines, looking confident, or being experienced can make a difference in the dating game. They completely ignore the aspect that the other person would also be going through the same feelings.

If you are new to dating, remain calm. It is not a gladiatorial conquest. You are going to know a new person. The more apprehensive you are, the tougher the knowing process will get. Remain calm and relaxed. If you are nervous, stressed, anxious or worried go easy on yourself. Do not try to excessively hide it as it can make you defensive or even cocky.

Treat it as a similar experience for the other person and try to be as normal as possible. There is no race and you would eventually get to know each other.

It Can Make You Go Around in Circles and Feel Dumb

Anxiety usually makes the initial conversation difficult.

Stammering, loss of words, temporary memory loss, the feeling of sheer stupidity are some common symptoms people feel. If you are also feeling the same, then believe me it isn't a 'Eureka' moment. Most of the dating population feels the same way. Most probably the other partner is also going through the same experience. It wouldn't put a dent in your efforts.

You should continuously start to relax and keep the conversations to normal. Start with light chit-chat and see where the conversation takes you.

However, if you feel really stressed about the whole dating game and want to make things work, you can follow the points given below.

The Ways to Overcome Anxiety in Dating

Don't Hide the Facts

Deception can make your fears turn real. Dating is not about hiding, but about sharing. Deception is the worst strategy to be used in dating. When you are dating someone, exaggerating things, not disclosing important things about yourself, or lying can prove to be dangerous. It forms a wrong impression on the partner. It can start the relationship on a false foundation that is bound to fall.

If you are afraid to tell the truths about yourself due to the fear of rejection, then you are making a mistake. Relationships are close affairs. Your partner will get to know everything eventually. Getting to know things at a later stage lead to worse results. In a new relationship, you have very little to lose. However, this would change as the relationship matures. The emotional and psychological bonding would strengthen with time. If your partner gets to know the real truths then and decides to leave on the basis of those facts, it would hurt more.

Don't Judge or Fear of Getting Judged

People are excessively afraid of getting judged by the other partner in dating. However, they don't realize that while they fear getting judged, they are judging the dating partner themselves. Dating is more about knowing each other and not judging. If you are trying to enter into a relationship, then keep your prejudices aside and get to know the other person. Lower your guard and let the other person also know you better. This is the only way a new

relationship can blossom. Keep your fears and anxieties aside.

Practice Acceptance

Unconditional acceptance of the qualities and shortcomings of a new partner is the best way to begin a relationship and sustain it. A relationship must always be inclusive. The relationships which are based on the merits and demerits of the partners do not last long. No one likes to be corrected at each and every step. If you are trying to do that with your partner, you should brace yourself for a big collision.

It's Not the End of the Road

People who treat dating as a once in a lifetime chance tend to fare far worse than those who treat it normally. Fear is bad for any kind of relationship. Such an emotion can make you look desperate and creepy. It is no way to treat a new relationship especially the one about which you know nothing. Enter into a relationship with an open mind. Give it your best effort and try to be honest and open. Do not go overboard with your efforts as it can make the other partner uncomfortable.

Live in the Present

Relationships are meant to bring joy in life. It is not the extent of the relationship but the amount of joy it brings in life. Joy comes in various packages. In the beginning look for the things that give joy to you. Once you start liking the relationship, you will put your best efforts to make it work and the same goes for the other partner too. Live the moment and try to rejoice it.

Things That Lead to Stress in Relationships

There are many factors that can lead to stress in a relationship. Lack of understanding and acceptance is among the biggest reasons for stress and anxiety in a relationship. Mistrust and accusing behavior are also a big reason that leads to stress and eventual failure of a relationship.

It is important that you understand the factors that can create rifts in a relationship and sincere efforts should be put to mend the cracks. It is important to understand that no relationship is perfect. Relationships can never be perfect. They are always variable. There

is always the space for adjustments and repair. If you can understand the problems in a relationship on time, such problems can be solved amicably.

Things That Lead to Stress in Relationships

Uncertainty About the Relationship

Uncertainty in the minds of partners in a relationship can creep anytime. They are not baseless as your behavior leads to such uncertainties a great extent. The important thing is to resolve the issues in time that have led to such uncertainties.

If you or your partner is having these thoughts then there is a serious need to have the commitment talk. Such concerns lead to high levels of stress and cloud the judgment and rational thinking. Reassurance of the commitment can work as an antidote in such scenarios.

Personal Insecurities

Partners can have insecurities. Most of the times, these insecurities are based on past experiences but they have a great impact on the present. Intentional or unintentional sarcasm, criticism or any judgment passed without much thought can also lead to such suspicions. Relationships are meant to be strong and supportive; however, they are attached with the thin thread of common trust and respect. Belittling, ridiculing or passing comments can put a huge dent in the relationship. If you or your partner is having such thoughts then it would be appropriate to have a thorough discussion over the subject.

Power Equation

For a relationship to go strong, both the partners should have their say in it. Domination by any one partner can leave the relationship off-balance. Balancing the power equation in a relationship is a tightrope walk. Relationships are not about exercising power but not having the power can make the partner feel vulnerable. Reassuring the partner of your sincerity and receptiveness is the right way to go at it.

Lack of Boundaries

Boundaries are important in all kinds of relationship. When one partner starts to exceed their boundaries, the friction starts taking

place. You must ensure that your partner gets the space he or she deserves and desires. Overstepping the boundaries can create distrust in relationships. Both the partners must always feel welcomed in a relationship and it cannot happen until they respect the set boundaries. A breach of boundary leads to stress and anxiety.

Safety Concerns

A relationship is a safe sanctuary. The role of the partners is to make each other feel safe and cared for in the relationship. Aggression in behavior and abusiveness can raise deep safety concerns. It raises the stress and anxiety levels astronomically. If you or your partner is feeling anything of this sort, you should talk to each other or take professional help. Ignoring such concerns will only lead to an abrupt end of the relationship.

Communication Gap

Healthy communication is the backbone of any relationship. It ensures that both the partners are able to raise their concerns and express themselves clearly. Lack of proper communication should always be taken seriously. If your communication channel with your partner has broken, you should put efforts to mend it back. Without proper communication, partners cannot raise their concerns. It increases the stress, anxiety, and suffocation in any relationship and makes it toxic.

Blame Game

The blame game is the most undesirable kind of communication in any relationship. It blocks the chances of improvement and puts the other partner in a defensive position. Relationship woes are meant to be addressed in a more civilized manner. Resorting to blame game can end the possibility of any future improvement, recovery, or reconciliation. It raises the threat perception to a whole new level. It also stimulates the fight or flight response in the partners.

Unloading of Past

Human brains have a vast storage capacity. They can record almost everything. However, in case of any kind of dispute between the partners in a relationship, only the bad memories come back in a flash. It is one of the most disastrous things to wipe out all the good

deeds of the partner and start counting the sins. It leads to mistrust and animosity. Partners should reconcile their differences in a civilized manner where they should discuss the areas of improvement and work on them. Unloading the past only brings back the baggage of the past in present.

Maintaining a relationship is a delicate job. A relationship is a union of two separate identities. It is in nature for two unique individuals with a separate set of qualities to have an attraction for each other. However, their uniqueness can also lead to friction. The trick is to run the whole thing in a synchronized manner.

Healthy relationships can help in lowering the stress and anxiety levels as they make you feel loved, wanted and cared for. They make you feel the connection and the longing. However, the same relationships can also increase the stress levels if they are not handled with care or not treated properly.

You must give your best to any relationship. It is the foundation of a healthy life. Our society is entirely based on relationships. But you should never forget the fact that every attempt has an endurance level. If you ever feel that your relationship is not fulfilling anymore or is bringing more stress to life than joy, then ending such relationships in an amicable way is the best resort.

Chapter 36. Forgetting Your Past

Getting Rid of Your Junk

Another factor that contributes to our worry is our constant clutter in our closets and other places. When we have a lot of clutter in different places, we may become really stressed and overwhelmed by the amount of stuff that we have. But what if we could make it simpler? Why not get rid of the stuff that is holding us back from living a meaningful life? That is what this chapter is for—to show you how to get rid of your junk and live a minimalist lifestyle.

What if the new more is less? That is what the minimalists are saying. With more people graduating from four-year universities with student loan debts of more than \$30,000 and people unable to get a decent job that pays the bills after graduating, it is no wonder that many millennials are in deep sludge. They cannot buy a car, let alone a house. Therefore, financially, it is becoming more difficult to be a millennial. Millennials are not likely to be able to retire later in their lives because of all the debt that they have acquired in their twenties. It makes for a difficult situation in every sense. The solution to all of this: buy less, consume less, and live with fewer possessions. That is what many millennials are having to do, and it is helping them to alleviate the worry of having so much junk that is causing many problems.

The key point to realize is that stuff does not make us happy. Accumulating more wealth, junk, and other material possessions is never going to make us happy. It is just going to make us more anxious about taking care of the things that could easily break, get damaged, or worse. We find ourselves worrying more when we have a mansion to take care of and other things. But as soon as we get rid of our junk, we find ourselves free to do greater things with our time. Miraculously, we are able to take a load off and stop worrying about the things that could go wrong or tear up. We also spend a lot more money this way, and we find ourselves unable to pay the bills each month, which is more disheartening and stressful.

What is the solution? Purge, purge, purge, I tell you! It is to get rid of everything that is getting in the way. That includes items that we absolutely do not need or desire. Don't let little things get in the

way of your life. You should try to do everything to rid yourself of the things that are robbing you of joy at the end of the day because it is not worth it. Cast off everything that is causing you harm and anything that is unnecessary. You don't need it. Try to clean the house at least once a month. Take inventory of your needs and surpluses and then get rid of the things that are not part of your essential items. It will help you get to where you want to be.

Case Study

Jason and Amy had a full house all the time. In fact, they used to keep all their old documents in a drawer that was bulging at the seams. They never threw away their old clothes. Their closets were literally exploding with everything. It became difficult for the couple to clean house at times because they had too much stuff, and they were struggling to make ends meet, which made it hard for them to take care of all of their things. So they ended up cleaning up their house and selling items that needed to be sold, and they got rid of a ton of things that were taking up too much space in their house. Fortunately, they were able to finish everything well. At the end of the day, they were able to sleep better at night. They had fewer things, more money in the bank, and more free time. It was a great success story.

Forgiving the Past

Sometimes it can be hard to forgive people and situations that have hurt us deeply in the past. However, what we have to learn to do is to get over the past and discover ways to forgive the hurts that have caused us great trouble. We must think of ways to overcome our various situations and forgive the past.

It is easier said than done, I know. However, it is something that you have to do to get rid of the emotional and psychological baggage that you have in your life. Perhaps you have experienced a breakup with a person. It was a terrible experience for you; you are trying to figure out how to move on, but it is continually nagging at you. That's where you must learn to let go and forgive the past of the many things that you may have gone through and move on to the things that motivate you.

Forgiving past mistakes, misjudgments, and heartbreaks will give you the ability to overcome your fears and find peace within your soul. I'm sure that sometimes you feel troubled by the things happening in this world. There are things that can cause you anxiety and stress because they make you remember some childhood trauma or other difficult experiences in the past. When this happens, you begin to relive the painful things of the past.

You need to learn to forgive your past. It is not going to happen automatically. Often, forgiveness is a process that involves a great deal of time before you can carry it out. The only way to get over it is to forget about what happened. Granted, it may take you years to overcome the damage that someone has done in your life, and you may spend a lifetime trying to forgive them. However, the sooner you do that, the better off you will be.

There are many cases of people who have walked through life with the emotional baggage of childhood trauma. One such example was Robin Williams, who had a lonely childhood. His parents put him in an attic of the house, where he was forced to play with his toys all by himself. He rarely saw his parents, except during private dinner gatherings. In that case, Robin felt that he was constantly seeking the validation and love of other people. Many people loved Robin, and they showed it, but he struggled to love himself because he had not felt that as a child. Consequently, he went through his life, struggling with the concept of love because his parents had not shown him love. That deep sadness followed him all the way to his grave after his suicide in 2014.

What Robin Williams shows us is an example of someone who had childhood worries and challenges follow him throughout his life. He was never able to forgive and forget the past, even though it would have helped him to live a more fulfilling life. We can learn from this example that childhood anxieties and trauma can follow us well into adulthood and that if we are not careful, they may follow us all the way to our death. It can be difficult to articulate our concerns to people because they are buried deep within us. Inside our psychology, there are hurting children who are struggling to overcome the difficulties of the past, but the sooner we can overcome the past, the sooner we will be happy and able to live a life that is full of love, joy, peace, and good fortune.

Another example of a person who released the past hurt was Will

Hunting from Good Will Hunting (1997), a movie with Ben Affleck, Matt Damon, and Robin Williams. Matt Damon's character, Will, is the main character who has been hurting from his past because he was abandoned by his parents and lived a life as an orphan with no family. He tried to mask his insecurities by drinking, smoking cigarettes, and using physical violence against others. However, he met Dr. Maguire, a psychologist who was played by Robin Williams. The psychologist was able to connect with Will on a deep emotional level and provide him the support he needed to overcome his past trauma. In one emotionally gripping moment, Robin Williams was able to get all the hurt out of Matt Damon's character as he burst into tears and hugged him. To calm him down, Robin's character, Maguire, kept saying, "It is not your fault." It was helpful to see this moment because it showed that the past could be effectively forgiven and wiped clean if a person wanted to do that. Maguire was able to get the pain out of Will and bring him to the point of forgiving the past. Although he might never forget what his parents had done to him to abuse him and eventually leave him, Will would be able to move on and do what he was meant to do, which was to "go and see about a girl." The touching story showed us how the past could be erased so that a person could go forward and discover his destiny. With moments of healing and wholeness, Will would be able to leave behind the darkness of his past and pursue his dream of being in love with someone.

What can we do to forgive our own past? The important thing to do is to realize that we need healing—spiritual, mental, and physical healing. Our minds and hearts are not in the right place. We have hurt from the past, and we feel that it is a dark chasm that we cannot escape from. However, we have to bring ourselves to repenting of our own misjudgments and the things that have caused us pain and anxiety and then also forgive those around us who have hurt us in some way. It is not easy, but it is a path that is well worth it because then we can find a way to feel better and heal. It is a lifelong process in some cases, but as we get rid of our excess emotional baggage, then we can find a freer and more prosperous future in our minds. It is crucial that we release stress, anxiety, and other things that are holding us back. If we don't do that, then we may be holding to something for the rest of our lives that could ultimately lead to our own downfall and destruction, as in the case of Robin Williams. Let's look at the ways that we can do this. How

can we emotionally release the past from our hearts and minds?

Practical Applications

1. Write down all the things that are causing us anxiety and worry and leave them for later. We should allow ourselves to release all the pain into the paper. After that, you burn the paper, shred it, or do anything to it to show that it is gone forever.
2. Say you're sorry to people you have hurt. What you have to do with this application is to say sorry to people whom you may have caused pain and anxiety. You may not realize how much this has put a rift in your relationship, and you will have to take the initiative to do it because it is highly likely the other person will not take the first step. You have to be proactive about this point.
3. Keep yourself super busy with things that you won't have time to worry or dwell on the past. You should find some ways to keep yourself busy so that you won't think about the things of the past. Do many kinds of projects that will help you experience joy and meaning in your life. Do things that give you passion.
4. Spend time with the people you love and don't spend time with negative people. Another point that you should think about is spending time with people who give you joy and avoiding Negative Nancys and other people who will just bring you down. This will help you to live a happier life.

Case Study

Frank had a difficult moment in the past that he was unable to forget. He was deeply hurt in a one-sided relationship with a girl. It was difficult because she had cheated on him, so he had to break up the relationship. For years, he went through a period of searching and trying to get over his pain, but every time he tried dating, the topic came up again, and he could feel that he was suffering from it on an ongoing basis. Then he went to his mentor and told him everything that held him back. He cried in his arms and felt the release of the burden of how this experience had been traumatic for him. It was difficult, but Frank was able to get rid of the pangs of guilt and unforgiveness that were in his heart. He allowed all of that to be out of his life. And once he had done that, he felt that he could truly be free—free, at last.

Conclusion

In order to release the bonds of oppression from the past, you must learn how to forgive the things of the past and release them. It is not easy, but once you do that, you will find yourself in a better place emotionally, spiritually, and physically. Write down the things that are bothering you about the past and then release them to the wind. Forgiveness—it's a beautiful thing.

Chapter 37. Strategies to Declutter your Mind

Signs You Have A Cluttered Mind

Do you sometimes feel like your head is going to explode because of so many things that require your attention and action? Alternatively, you could be feeling down, overwhelmed, and even stressed out. Well, you have filled your mind with clutter. Mental clutter can have bad side effects like confusion, sucking your energy, taking away your focus, and blocking your intuition. The following are some of the signs that you are suffering from mental clutter. If you find yourself having many of these signs, then you need to act immediately to stop any harm that it may bring you.

Sleeping problems

If you find yourself sleeping more hours or fewer hours than usual, waking up after sleeping for just a few hours, finding it hard to fall asleep, or if you can't go back to sleep after waking up, then there is a problem somewhere. These sleep problems could be because of anxiety and stress that result from mental clutter. Do assessments of your life, find the source of your clutter, and take action. You cannot do everything at once but systematically, you can eliminate mental clutter.

Difficulty in managing anger or controlling temper

Do you find yourself easily irritated by those people around you? If this is true, then you are suffering from stress overload and it can harm your health as well as affect your relationship with the people around you. Mind clutter is responsible for this condition and especially from negative thoughts and regrets. If you cannot control your anger, then it simply means that you cannot manage your feelings.

If you lack anger management, you may not even realize it because you feel okay when you are alone. The symptom will only come out when you are with other people, and you will likely blame them for what you feel. You may not realize that you have a problem, but if people constantly tell you to control your anger, then you need to eliminate the unnecessary clutter in your mind that is stealing your

peace of mind and happiness.

Mental fatigue and forgetfulness

Do you sometimes feel tired even before doing any task, and you feel your mind cannot even do simple reasoning or calculations? The clutter in your mind is responsible for this. You could be having so many things to do but you do not know where to start because your mind is overloaded and confused. Mental clutter will drain your energy leaving you hopeless and feeling like you cannot do it or it is too hard.

When the mind is overwhelmed, it simply switches off and this makes you feel tired and fatigue. This can be a sign of stress due to mental overload. You can fix this problem by doing meditation so that you clear your mind of any unnecessary thoughts, stress, and replace it with a calm and relaxed mind.

Mind clutter can also affect your memory giving you a temporary memory loss. When you are suffering from stress and mental clutter, you will tend to forget things easily, like forgetting to pay your bills, forgetting to purchase some things from the grocery, forgetting about an important appointment or date. Therefore, if you find that you are becoming more forgetful, try to find out what could be the underlying problem, and if it is stress, find out what is causing it.

Not interested in social activity

Did you love going for social events, but lately, you hate the idea of social places? Do you feel better when you are alone than when in the company of your friends? These could be signs of mental overload or any other emotional issues that you need to address. Anxiety also can play a big role in having such feelings. Mental overload can rob you of your time and happiness. This is because it gives you mental fatigue and stress that can never allow you to have fun with your friends but you will rather get into bed and sleep.

Sex is no longer fun

Although you love your partner, there are times that sexual desires seem to take a break. If you have no problems in your relationship, then other factors like stress and anxiety could be the reason why you are no longer interested in sex. Mental clutter can occupy your

mind that you no longer have space to think of other things. Remember, the mind processes sexual desires, but mind clutter cannot allow it because there is not any space in the mind to receive and process such information.

If you are in a good relationship with your partner yet your sexual desires are diminishing, and you do not enjoy the sexual act, you need to find out the reason why as soon as possible. Try meditation to eliminate any unnecessary thoughts so that your mind can relax and focus on important things in your life.

Focusing on what's wrong instead of focusing on what's right

Do you dwell on your failures that you overlook your successes? If you are fond of only looking at the negative side of your life, then you will not make it in life. Mind clutter consists of negative thoughts, worries, and endless "to-do" list. Focusing on your regrets and failures will clutter your mind unnecessarily. It will block your mind from focusing on the real issues that can lead you to achieve your goals in life.

Getting out of the house in the morning becomes a problem

This sounds funny, but it is not. You walk out of the house only to realize that you have left the house keys on the table, then you go for it. When you reach your car, you find that your car keys are inside the house you go back for them. Upon returning, you remember your file is missing. Gee whiz, it is crazy! All these could be a result of anxiety and mind clutter. You can avoid this by planning things. Set aside those things you take to work and place them on one side so that you will just pick them up and leave in the morning.

Your life feels out of control

You feel overwhelmed by everything, at the workplace, and at home. You always feel like lagging behind, and the efforts to catch up seem futile. You start feeling like losing your mind or giving up altogether! You need to sit down and write down your "to-do" list according to priorities and tackle them. Eliminate those worries and stress because it will just hold you back.

You know you own something, but you cannot remember where you placed it

This can be frustrating! You can imagine turning your house upside

down just to look for a pair of scissors. If you want to avoid such a mess, you can assign everything in its own place. This will help you locate something when you want to use it.

Mood swings

Have you interacted with someone whose moods you can never predict? Stress and anxiety can contribute to moody behavior. Mind clutter can also make you moody because you are struggling to attend to several thoughts that keep flowing in your mind. This can lead to stress and anxiety. Mood swings can affect your relationships. Practice meditation so that you can clear and calm your mind.

Strategies To Declutter Your Mind

Have you ever tried to visualize how the inside of your brain looks like? Is it cluttered, disorganized, and overwhelmed by thoughts, or is it organized with a clear plan on how it should handle tasks? Just like we sometimes throw things around in our homes, our brains also collect so much information every day and it tries to store it in its limited space. This can stress us and it can take away our focus. We need to find ways to get rid of these unnecessary clutters in our minds and we can use the following strategies:

Set your priorities straight

Assess your life and identify your aspirations, goals, as well as those important things in your life. It is time to get rid of those things that are just taking space in your mind and they are not helping you in any way. Things like worries, regrets from past failures and missed opportunities, anxiety should not feature anywhere in your mind. This is because they will hold you back from progressing in your life.

Set aside those things that are dear to you and focus on them. You may be having an endless list of "to-do" items, which can be overwhelming, so narrow them down to priorities. Things like family and career are very important because they are the reason we wake up early with hopes. So concentrate on making your family happy as well as progressing in your career. When you know your priorities in life, it is easier to focus on it.

Practice meditation

Meditation has proven to be useful in decluttering the mind by

calming and relaxing it. It is the best remedy for anxiety and a cluttered mind because it will eliminate those worrying negative thoughts and unleash the power in you. You should practice meditation every day, even for 10 minutes only to give you a healthy mind or good mental health. It will take your mind to clarity naturally and without any effort.

Write them down

This is the best way to ease the burden of thoughts in your mind. Write all your worries, ideas, and tasks that need your attention. Placing them on paper will declutter your mind leaving it free space to focus on the most important tasks. When your mind is free from clutter, you will be able to store new ideas hence enabling you to live in the present, something that cannot happen with a cluttered mind.

With the emergence of technology, it will be easy for you to get an app that can help you organize your tasks or projects according to priorities. You can also use these apps to document your new ideas so that you do not forget them.

Declutter your physical space

Physical clutter will contribute to your mental clutter. Research links stress with a physically cluttered environment. You can avoid this by cleaning and organizing your space. Do it daily so that clutter does not pile up, and you can start by putting away those things that you do not need and organize those that are useful by keeping them in their rightful places.

You should remember to check your mails, sort them out, and respond to them accordingly as you get rid of those spams that are irrelevant so that you declutter your inbox. Nothing beats a clean and organized space; you will even find it cool and relaxing to be there.

Avoid procrastination

Postponing decision-making will only clutter your mind. You need to learn to do tasks as they come and this will reduce the workload and the anxiety that comes with it. Although some decisions require some thinking time, you may end up pushing them at the back of your mind, and they will pile up eventually. The cluttered minds will give you a sense of overwhelm, which will affect your

productivity and mental clarity.

Eliminate negativity

Negative energy can occupy a big space in your mind if you allow it, and it can be detrimental. Negative self-talk is worse because it will drain your energy and divert your focus. The most important step to take is to identify this negativity in our minds so that we can work on getting rid of it.

You can challenge this negativity by proving it wrong! For example, if your inner critic is telling you that you cannot do it, then do it and do it to your best and you will never hear that inner critic ever again. Therefore, every time you have a negative thought, replace it with a positive one, and with time, you will succeed in eliminating negativity completely from your mind.

Read some inspirational books

If you read a success story of someone who excelled in something that you have been brushing off it can motivate you to start doing something. Reading good inspirational books can help you improve your life if you implement the ideas you get there.

Avoid multitasking

Although people prefer to multitask to save on time and resources, it is not a good practice. Multitasking will limit your productivity because it overloads your mind with activities. To increase your productivity, you need to prepare your "to-do" list according to priorities. Once you have the "to-do" list, focus on tackling one task at a time and allocate each task-specific time. This will help you to be accountable for how you spend your time on the tasks.

Get outside

Going for outdoor activities can work magic in decluttering your mind and calming you. The outdoor atmosphere is therapeutic, especially a cool and silent environment. You can take a walk in the park, go hiking, go swimming, take a walk along the beach while listening to the ocean sounds, or go jogging with your dog. Such environments can clear your mind of any overload and make you feel good and relaxed.

Talk it out

Sharing your distressing thoughts with a friend or a family member

eases mental overload. Whenever we share our worries, we feel lighter and stronger. Therefore, talking it out helps us to release the negative energy that we carry so that we can have room for positive energy.

Practical Exercises to Help Declutter Your Mind

Reflect on key areas to set your focus

Does it spark joy? Our brains absorb so many kinds of stuff every day; we need to eliminate that stuff that is not useful. If it brings joy, let it remain, and if it does not, let it go. Past disappointments or mistakes should not stay in your mind. Just let it go. Allowing your past to consume your mind will cause unnecessary mind clutter that will take away your focus. Put it in the past and live in the present. Set aside those things that are important or prioritize tasks and plan on how you will execute them.

For example, if you had planned to go to the grocery store, but you realize that you have everything you need, so there's no need to go. What will you do with that thought? Is it still relevant or it is now a mental clutter? You need to free your mind from old stuff that is no longer important to you.

Are there daily activities that you do, but they do not add you any value? Stop doing them since they are just cluttering your mind and blocking other new ideas that may be important.

Limit information intake

Do you really need all that information that you are reading from the social media and TV? We consume too much information on a daily basis from the TV, newspaper, social media, blogs, and other publications. This unnecessary information clutters our mind causing a mental overload that leads to mental fatigue and stress.

Take a look at all this information and decide which ones to discard and which ones to continue consuming. Decluttering this information will help you to focus only on what is important. Choose the channels that will give you important information instead of going through several channels to get the same information or irrelevant information.

Focus on one thing at a time

Multitasking will limit your focus on the tasks that you are tackling because it divides your attention. It will also cause mental overload

and drain your energy hence making you less productive. Multitasking will leave you with several incomplete projects cluttering your mind and crying for your attention.

Have a list of those things you wish to do and arrange them in priorities. Tackle one task at a time, only going to the next task when you are through with the current one. Clearing mental clutter will leave you feeling lighter, more positive and more productive.

Take a break

Taking a break from the normal routines can be refreshing. Your brain needs some rest to recharge and refocus. Take a short vacation far from your normal duty station and have fun while you are there. You can take short breaks when doing those tasks that require maximum concentration. Take a walk, go jogging or chat with a friend, do anything that just makes you happy and relaxed. Nature can heal you, calm you and reduce your stress.

Practice gratitude

We should be grateful for what we have rather than whine about what we do not have. If we learn to have gratitude, it means we will be thinking positive. This simply means that you will not have room for negative thoughts and this will help you clear your mind of unnecessary thoughts. If we live a life of gratitude and positive thinking, then we shall have a better life.

Write a journal

Writing a journal is a great way to declutter your mind by organizing your thoughts. Actually, it is a brain dump where you offload all your thoughts and ideas, leaving your mind free space to focus and have mental clarity.

Challenge your inner critic

The inner critic is a negative voice that can divert your focus and hinder you from achieving your goal if you listen to it. The inner critic can analyze past mistakes to see the outcome of our future. However, our past cannot determine our futures; neither can our past mistakes. Do not listen to the negative voices from the inner critic but instead replace them with positive talks.

Get enough and good sleep

Good sleep is very important for good mental health. You need to

get enough sleep so that your mind can clear the clutter and relax. You should sleep for 7-8 hours daily or more. Once your mind is free of clutter, it can now focus well and process information accordingly and this will improve productivity and your life in general.

Chapter 38. Final Thoughts About Calming your Worries and Anxiety

Worries and Anxiety

We all have worries in our hearts and minds. We worry about putting on too much weight, how much money we have, the snowball of bills that come into our mailbox each month, and all the other things that affect our lives. Although that is a normal thing for most people, some people struggle with depression and anxiety as a result of life's worries. Their concerns severely affect their ability to function properly and do things in everyday life. This is a stumbling block to helping people get on the road to where they want to be. We are now going to talk about how to deal with life's worries and anxiety and act appropriately.

Fight or Flight

When it comes to dealing with life's problems, different people act in their own way by facing a problem or by fleeing the scene. Many people get tempted to run away from scenarios that could get them into trouble and put them into an unfortunate situation. If you can avoid such a situation, you can also flee from the stress of that situation. However, it is not always possible to avoid such situations. Sometimes you have to face the problems of your life, as Maria said in *The Sound of Music*. It is, therefore, best to figure out ways that you can respond to the things that are stressing you out.

One way to combat stress is to exercise. Then you can fight the worries that are clouding your mind. Exercise is one way to get rid of stress by releasing endorphins. You can feel good after one workout, which will help improve your mood and relieve you from the burdensome cares of life. Exercise will also help you feel less nervous.

The fight-or-flight response is our body's natural instinct that we can use for our benefit. It is our coping mechanism when faced with situations that are naturally difficult. Our fight-or-flight response can help us to escape situations that could be dangerous to us. For example, when a fierce animal is coming toward us, we respond by running away from the place. It is important to bear in mind that it

can help us or hinder us from moving forward with our lives. But the most important thing is to learn how to face our problems.

Structured Problem-Solving

Before you deal with a problem, it is crucial that you first think of the best way to respond to the situation. When you do a simulation, you will know how you should deal with a particular situation. This will help you solve the problem. If you usually worry a lot, you will find that you will feel better after confronting your problems proactively with an understanding of the issue. This way, there will be no surprises, and you will be able to handle the situation in a positive way. Solving problems is going to help you experience greater happiness. When you know how to handle all the challenges that life throws your way, you will feel better and more confident.

Limit Your Consumption of Media

Technology has a lot of benefits for us, but it can also prove to be harmful. There's no doubt that social media can be a source of stress in our lives. We compulsively check Facebook or Instagram for the latest notifications, and then we see messages that make us worry. However, if you intentionally limit your screen time and your interactions on social media, you will find that it is liberating, and you will be free of the chains that bind you to your online profile. In addition, you will experience fewer things that distract you. This will give you more productivity in your life. Try to spend a month without the distraction of social media. Get away from it for a little while and see the difference in your overall morale. You will feel much better.

Too many of us spend over four or five hours on our phones every day. We answer messages, spend time on Facebook, surf the web, watch movies, and do other things. Consuming more media is going to lead to more stress, and therefore, we should be mindful to avoid it as much as possible. Limit your screen time to only a few hours a day; you will feel better. Read a book. Go outside and enjoy the sunshine. Take a walk. Do some recreational activities that will get you out of the house and into the world. It will feel like you've made a major upgrade to your life.

Try Meditation or Aromatherapy

When you feel burdened by the weight of everyday stresses, you might feel that there is no way to get out of it. However, you should

simply find a place where you can be quiet and relaxed with some soothing music that will calm your mind. Find a place where you can allow the stress to pass away. Furthermore, you can enhance this experience by including some aromatherapy. So get some candles and scented oils that will put you in your happy place and calm your spirits. You will feel like the clouds have lifted from your mind and that the sun has come out and is shining over your heart and mind. It's a new day. Enjoy it! You deserve to be happy. Be good to yourself.

Take a Shower or Hot Bath

Another method that will help you feel loads better is if you jump into the shower or take a hot bath. You will feel that your muscles relax, and your whole body will feel a lot better. So go right ahead. Get into the water. Experience the joy of the stress being rinsed away with the water that is flowing gently against your skin. As you soak your body in the water, you can exfoliate your skin and feel the difference. You can also try aquatic therapy. Visit your local pool and allow yourself to swim the stress away. You will feel the difference, not only in your physical body but also in your mind. It is a full body experience that you will not regret doing.

Exercise

To cope with your everyday stress, it is important that you de-stress, and one of the ways to do this is through exercise. It is best to find an activity that works for you. There are many options that you can choose from. Aerobic activity is helpful to release endorphins, which will make you feel good and have a greater mood. Then you can feel the physical and mental health benefits.

If you don't want to do too much exercise, you can simply do a lot of walking. When you start to feel worried, go outside and take a walk. Even better, you can take a brief, intensive power walk or jog that will give you the freedom and mobility like you have never experienced before.

Rest and Experience Freedom like No Other

One of the things that we tend to neglect in our lives is getting enough rest. We power through the day and go on with our limitless supply of caffeine in our coffee and other energy drinks. We find ourselves spending more time on the computer. And often, we answer work-related inquiries well into the night while getting

five or six hours of sleep. We just don't know how to take a load off and get away from work. That is especially the case with people who live in the United States who are prone to workaholism. We work more than ever before. We put on more weight than before and live an unhealthy lifestyle. One of the things that we need to learn how to do is rest and get more of it. It is vital that we rest and relax from all the cares of this life. Think about ways that you can do this.

1. Sleep like a baby at night.

Sleep is one of the most neglected things when life gets busy. However, we should remember that if we get more sleep, we feel healthier and happier. Getting enough rest at night is one of the ways to improve our quality of life. We can feel a lot better if we just get the right amount of shut-eye, and that usually amounts to eight to nine hours of sleep a night. I know you may be thinking, "How in the world am I going to be able to do that with my busy schedule, three kids to take care of, wife to love, etc.?"

Well, you should make sleep an important part of your wellness routine. Aside from giving you the physical benefit of feeling at your best, sleep gives us a mood boost, and we don't need to rely on as much caffeine in our system. Instead, we feel like we have more energy, and then we can go about our day with feelings of happiness. Try to get more sleep at night, and you will feel the significant change it brings to your overall health. Plus, you'll protect your body against diseases and illnesses that can easily bring you down. Sleep more for your health.

2. Go right ahead and take that nap.

Napping also has proven health benefits. Even a short 20-minute nap can boost your mood and give you the needed energy to keep going through your day. Sometimes, naps can help you recover from the effects of sleep deprivation and can improve your productivity. You can try it out and see how much better you will feel. Just don't nap too much because it might mess with your sleep cycle, making it difficult for you to fall asleep at night. Be careful but enjoy it!

3. Sometimes, it's just doing nothing.

Sometimes, rest does not involve any kind of activity. It just involves doing nothing, whether that is hanging out on the beach,

swimming in a pool, taking a walk, or sitting in a given place. You can also practice meditation. Sit quietly in a given space and simply observe your surroundings. Just looking at things and staring out into space may seem like a waste of time and energy, but the thing is, resting contributes to your productivity. And you don't need to be productive every hour of the day. Instead, you should try to find moments where you can recharge your energy. Many times by spending time alone, especially for introverts.

4. Do some restful activities, such as walking the dog or writing in your journal.

Another thing you can do is find restful activities that don't involve too much thinking or reflection. That includes walking the dog or writing in your journal. It helps you externalize your feelings, and it makes you feel better and more energized afterward because you are not focused on the things that you must do. Instead, you choose this kind of activity. You do it because you want to, not because it's on your to-do list. It is something that will give you genuine joy, and you carry that joy with you no matter where you go.

5. Spend time with a few good friends.

Depending on your personality, socializing can either be an energizing experience or a draining one. However, most people think that it can be inherently helpful to spend time with a few good friends, playing some ball, watching a movie, or even traveling together. That can be a very restful time for everyone involved. You will see how much better you feel when you can spend a good time with your close friends. The rest will be fantastic.

Case Study

David was a workaholic dad who always spent time at the office. Often, he had no idea how he could turn off his inner world. He always felt he was on-call. He had to get his kids to soccer practice, go to the office to complete a project, and get dinner from the nearest take-out center. Even then, he would lie in bed at night and worry about all the things that he had to do the next day.

He could never get rid of all the worries and rest. But then he saw a counselor who helped him to identify what things he could cut out of his life to make him feel more fulfilled and less stressed and worried about the minute cares of life. David practiced mindfulness and meditation. He started to spend more time sitting and doing

nothing. In addition, he tried to implement cat naps into his day, which instantly boosted his energy and productivity. Later, he worried less and began to sleep a lot better at night. He started to turn off his notifications past 9:00 p.m. He stopped answering work-related inquiries and found himself with a better work-life balance.

In the end, everything worked out, and David felt the difference in his mind and body. David was finally able to figure out how to rest and get rid of his worry and anxiety, which plagued his mind, body, and soul. In the end, he became a much happier, more relaxed, and more productive man. It was fantastic!

Conclusion

To sum up, it is crucial that you find ways to cope with your feelings of worry and anxiety. It is not easy to deal with the daily cares and concerns that we have, but when you have developed good coping strategies, you will feel better about things. You feel that you have more control over your emotional response to situations.

Although you may not be able to control the situations and things around you, you can control how you will respond to them. When you practice these techniques in dealing with the various worries in your life, you will find that you don't feel as scared or nervous about the future. Things don't seem as frightening or overbearing anymore. You think to yourself, "I can do this! No problem! I will be able to handle whatever comes my way because I have developed the techniques to deal with all things. It's going to be okay. No worries!"

When you apply this can-do and positive mindset, you can do all things. It won't matter anymore what happens. You will think to yourself, "Don't worry. Be happy!" It will be fantastic—no more fear of tomorrow because it will take care of itself. You will be ready to tackle the day without feeling worried and anxious about what will happen. It will be the road to recovery and thriving that you have been waiting for. Let's do it! You've got this!

Chapter 39. Conclusion

The next step is to reaffirm every day that you are on your way to becoming a better, fuller you. Review how far you've come so far and be proud! As with anything, the key to success is consistency and determination. Believe in yourself and your ability to make the changes necessary to realize your goals. Once you've removed the clutter from your mind, you will turn overthinking into focused achieving, each and every day. You may have heard many times over, "easier said than done." Well, you should be excited to learn how to do what you set your mind to do. You've wanted to make a change for a long time. Taking the steps to make your goals come to fruition is something many people never achieve.

It is times like this, after having taken a big step forward in my life, when I begin to reflect on how far I've come. It is hard to appreciate your progress sometimes when you are in the heat of battle and struggling every day during the beginning, middle, or even near the end of your efforts. There is nothing better than stepping up onto that final rung and looking down to see all of those completed steps in your wake.

Remember when you were sitting at square one, unable to free yourself from the chains of overthinking? I know it well—I've been there myself. It takes a great deal of courage to stand up and say, I'm ready to make a change. It saddens me to think that many people continue to overthink and overanalyze throughout their entire lives, missing out on the experiences and appreciation that a free mind can realize. It is easy to slip into the comfortable habits of mindless eating, checking a phone or tablet every few minutes, and going to bed later and later until your system is all out of sorts. Sometimes, it seems too easy to give in and let what's easy overshadow what's worth working for. You don't have to be a slave to overthinking, and maybe it's possible for you to take what you've learned and help change lives around you.

Perhaps you know someone who seems to be struggling with overthinking, stressing out about everyday challenges and stress just like you were at the beginning of your journey. Consider reaching out and sharing what you've learned. Nothing feels better

than sharing new knowledge with someone who can use it to make the positive changes you've seen happen in yourself. Maybe it's a coworker, a spouse, or a close friend. Many people from different walks of life will benefit from the changes laid out in this book, so why not share your story!

Chapter 40. INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY

Hey, please wait! Don't you think you should do better than you're doing now? Are you not supposed to have achieved more than this? Well, I think you deserve better, and you can be more productive. How? Well, it'll be of great advantage to you if you can read beyond this paragraph. Trust me; it'll be an adventurous journey of no regret.

"Look at him; he's now the best engineer in town. I want to be the best too."

"Wow! Fred has completed the project we both discussed. How I wish I had started then. I want to complete mine too."

"Hey Khan, you now speak French fluently, amazing! But you didn't understand the language at all when we met two years ago; we only promised each other to learn it. I want to learn French too."

Hello my able reader, is it only about "wanting to?" Obviously, no. So, I ask, when will you start what you need to do too? When will you migrate from "I want to" to "I am now doing it" or "I have completed it"? Maybe you need to know this - procrastinating is not the best way you can live. That habit won't earn you higher performance. To be realistic, it's not your ideal way of life.

You are meant to be successful just like those individuals you always "want to" be like. You know what? You can even be better than them. But on this condition - you need to employ higher performance habits that are going to be analyzed thoroughly in this book. No successful man ever lives the other way and attains the height of success.

Among the backbones of the successful ones, is their highly polished habit. Like I said, anyone can be wealthy. Anyone can be successful. Anyone can attain the highest height, irrespective of his/her background. The realization of this will eventually be traced down to how you use your time, the habits you employed, and, your level of self-discipline. J.K Rowling said, "It doesn't matter how you're born, but what you grow to be." You can be born-again, even if not in spirit.

Without getting you deceived, I can prove to you that whatever you become in life is absolutely the product of what you engage in and

the techniques you apply (how you live). Nevertheless, some people stand a better chance than others, probably because of the environment or family they were born into, people they grew up with, and so on. But at the same time, the rich man's child sometimes ends up in poverty. Pastor's son can be the most notorious child around, while a teacher's child can be one of the dumbest in class. In a nutshell, your background is not a determining factor for your success, and having a chance is not a ticket into an ideal life. It is simple logic. You still rely on your higher performance habits - HYPHYP (Higher You Perform, Higher You Produce). How do you start performing higher? We're coming to that.

Why aim higher productivity in life? Funny question, right? Well, some people think that way. They think their current level can stay with them for the rest of their life having forgotten that life is a race. Life is a race? Yes, I think so. Right from when you were a sperm, you literally competed with thousands of others, which means, you, reading this now, won that first race. Every living human, at every point in time, is continuously in pursuit of one thing or the other - mostly personal success. There are always set-goals everyone wants to reach. You want your business to always flourish. You want to learn new skills. You want to achieve more. Yes, this has been like that for a long time and will continue to be, as long as the land of the living exists. People will always want more achievements, want to be fitter, record more productivity, attain more success, more and more good things in life. Now you know why David Jordan said, "There is no real excellence in all this world which can be separated from right-living." Perhaps, that's why you're here.

The indisputable truth is that the same formula others used to achieve more is meant to earn you more productivity as well if no mistakes; therefore, if you think you've applied all the techniques the successful ones used and you're still not getting a result like theirs, then you need to read this book to discover what you may be doing wrong. You are at the right place. I mean, you're holding and leafing through the right book that will help you tailor your habits right. Trust me; you're the one I had in mind before and while writing this book. I know someone, somewhere, really needs to polish his/her habits, in order to be more productive in life, and

that's you. So, permit me to say to you, congratulations!

So far as you continue reading, and willing to read to the end, I'll like to inform you on some of the treasures you'll mine out of this during your journey:

Maybe you've been worrying about, "I break every promise I make to myself. I intend to polish my habits, but I end up defeated. I set goals and dissolve it, and I don't know what to do again." The help you need is here. "Upon all my hard work, I still seem stagnant compared to my mates." Read this to the end. "I've been trying to emulate the successful ones so I can be successful too, but it all seems unrealistic." Keep reading; I got a secret to that as well. "What about me? I have no resources I can refine?" Time is the most valuable resource which I can assure you have, so dig deeper into this book for proper utilization. "My condition is the most critical; I can't keep to time, I don't know how to manage resources, I procrastinate, I..." Whatever bad habit that's delaying your productivity, no matter how your situation seems like, I can guarantee you it'll be addressed here. Just read on!

Chapter 1. Self-Discipline

Self-discipline is the ability to be able to control your emotions and feelings to a point where it can help you overcome your weaknesses and desire to give in to temptation. People are not born with self-discipline. It is a state of mind. It is something you can learn. Once cultivated, it becomes a part of who you are. You may wonder if a change is still possible. Yes, it is.

The road to self-discipline is going to put you to the test and push you beyond your comfort zone. However, it will also make you a much stronger and better person. There is a reason why we often hear successful individuals attribute their success to hard work and self-discipline.

Lack of Self-Discipline

It is wrong for you to think that self-discipline is an inborn trait in people who have it. Such erroneous thoughts will make you believe you can't possibly build self-discipline if you lack it. No one is born with self-discipline. If you want to become self-disciplined, you can do so with the right determination and commitment. However, several factors could be responsible for your lack of self-discipline or your inability to build or develop self-discipline.

Lack of purpose

The purpose is what you live for. It's that one driving force that keeps you going. The goal is that very thing you remember and makes you decide to keep on moving on, no matter the level of discouragement you encounter. When you lack ambition, you can't be self-disciplined. One man once said that the purpose of life was to have an experience of use, and I entirely agree with him. What this shows is that a life without purpose is not worth living, because a man that has nothing to live for never truly lived.

Lack of goals

This one is closely related to the lack of purpose mentioned above. Your goal at any point in your life is like a compass that tells you where you are going and the right path to take to get there.

Negative Influencers

Many factors determine your dominant habits and characters. One major thing that contributes to shaping your beliefs and your style

is the environment where you spend time in more than anywhere else.

Negative Stereotypes

To some people, they can't become self-disciplined because they believe they were born to break every breakable rule.

Lack of willpower

Most people lack adequate willpower to enable them to affect the needed positive changes in their habits and lifestyles to become more successful and productive. People who lack willpower does not even attempt to change things that are negative in their lives, and also when they do, they cannot persevere after an initial setback or failure.

Fear of Failure

Fear is one of the most dangerous enemies. It won't let you fulfill anything in life, and perhaps it's going to be one of your first barriers. It's necessary to overcome fear, and if we don't do so, we'll get stuck in our actual situation with no probability of personal, professional, academic, or any other type of growth.

Decaying culture in today's society

A society whose values, cultures, and traditions are dying can only produce individuals with every trace of moral decadence. If you live in a society where people no longer frown at what used to be seen as an abnormality a few years ago, that could be a reason for your lack of self-discipline.

Excuse lifestyle

Self-discipline includes a non-excuse lifestyle. Many people adopted the habit of always having excuses for the mistakes made. First of all, as adults, we have to accept our errors and face the consequences as a deserved punishment. It's a necessary process that will heighten our capability of improving.

Many goals

There's nothing more dangerous for self-discipline than having too many things to do or wanting to reach too many goals. This lifestyle is going to defocus your efforts to develop your self-discipline. If you don't take your time to prioritize and select the things you want to do, you will end up with a lot of things to do and with no time to complete them. That's why it is essential to have chosen the most important objectives to achieve so that you can focus entirely on

them.

Lack of self-esteem

You must know that you can accomplish any task you propose. If you are often underestimating yourself and repeating to yourself, you won't be able to perform anything or something specific, and you probably won't. Lack of self-esteem is a very recurrent problem nowadays, especially in this much-globalized world, where talent and competition are everywhere. Many people fall in depression when they are going to work on something and realize that there are a lot of people who also do the same thing way better and have more experience.

The weak state of health

This is a very important factor to take into account in order to evaluate the lack of self-discipline. Having an excellent mental and physical health will help you build self-discipline. The lack of rest, of sleep, malnourishment, not having lunch at adequate times, and any other bad alimentary habit will keep you weak and defocused.

Distraction

This is a very pleasant cause for the lack of self-discipline. We'd like to perform an activity but suddenly we want to have something to eat, we want to take another rest, we'd like to watch a movie, the internet is demanding my attention, some comments were made on my Facebook wall and then, time goes by, and we have lost the entire day. Distraction is a prevalent factor that carries us away from being self-disciplined. It might be one of the worst because this temptation will always be with us and things or events that can distract us are going to be available all the time.

The Resistance

Here is the reality of building self-discipline. Before you start you need to go look at your why. Why are you really doing this? Those reasons I mentioned above like losing weight is cute and all but that's not going to get you to fully commit to what you want.

Because guess what? As soon as you start to change all kinds of funny stuff will happen. You will see friends beginning to question you about why you are doing this. They will tell you things like "I like the old you better". They will tell you "You are acting kind of weird" or "Come out drinking with us". They will fire all these

things at you and test your resolve.

Most people, unfortunately, fold right here and throw in the towel. They break at the first resistance. Friends and acquaintances are just one form of resistance you will come across. There are many forms of resistance. The most dangerous form of resistance is internal resistance

What is The Internal Resistance?

The author Steven Press field of the great book ‘The War of Art’ gave it a name he called it the “resistance”. The resistance is that voice that comes up when you want to start making moves in your life. It’s the voice that comes up when you want to go running. The voice will whisper in your ear for example, “You don’t need to go run now, it’s cold outside, let’s do it tomorrow.”

Or the voice will say “Go buy that pizza it looks great. Who needs these healthy meals you eat every night?” The voice of the resistance will be a constant pain in the ass. It will always try and stop you when you have important things to do.

Your “Why” Needs to Be Strong

Family, friends the resistance and other factors trying to stop you is a reality. The reason most people stop is that they have a weak “why?” You need to go ask yourself why you are doing this. Why are you really doing this? There has to be something deeper driving you. Only you can answer this question.

Marketing Secrets

In marketing, they have figured out that humans get motivated usually by 2 very powerful forces. The forces of pain and pleasure. Pain and pleasure by itself are just 2 things we experience on a daily basis. However, it can be incredibly powerful tools if you use them effectively.

In this book about self-discipline, we need something to make our “why” incredibly powerful. A great way to find your “why” is to go to the two powerful tools of pain and pleasure.

For example, why do you want to lose weight? To look good? Feel better? Whatever your reason is there has to be something more profound. Let’s take pain as an example.

When you are fat you might see people pointing at you and laughing because you look fat in your t-shirt. How do you feel

about that? Does it feel nice to be embarrassed? No, of course not. It causes pain, right? It feels bad.

If this happens all the time the pain gets more and more intensive and severe. Instead of running from this pain how about using it to get what you want? How about remembering very clearly how that pain felt and telling yourself you never want to feel like that ever again.

Therefore, whenever you find yourself in a situation where you want to quit than take a moment and thinks about the pain. Feel that pain deeply and then just get up and do it because the pain will drive you to get there.

For me, the pain was related to money. For a time in my life, I experienced so much pain with money that I would do anything to not experience that feeling of pain related to money. That pain became me “why”. Ask yourself how much pain you will feel if you don’t do that thing that you’re supposed to do? Then realize you never want to experience that again.

Pleasure has a similar power although I find pain to be working better for me. If you want to do something for example not eat the cake, then ask yourself this. How much pleasure will you have when you take your shirt off, and you look like an absolute boss walking around? Imagine the pleasure of the compliments and the admiring looks from friends and strangers. Imagine the respect you will get for being so dedicated to creating a body like that. These images in your mind of pleasure should be strong enough for you to get going. These feelings of pleasure will be your “why”.

You Must Be Willing to Do Things You Have Never Done Before

After you figured out your “why” we need to get to a very important reality. This reality will make or break your attempt to become self-disciplined. Self-Discipline is a tool to live a powerful life. But it’s also a tool to live a very successful life and achieve your goals.

For you to get what you want in life you need self-discipline. However, you will not succeed with self -discipline if you don’t accept this important reality. The reality is this: You must be willing to do things that you have never done before. If you don’t you will not be successful.

You are going to have to do many things you don’t like. Therefore,

you will have to do things you have never done before. So you will be uncomfortable and you will constantly feel like you want to give up.

You Must Become the Ruler of Your Own World

Most People on this planet are in an unconscious state of chaos. The world in its natural state is in chaos. When humans created civilization, they formed a stable environment and brought some form of structure to the random chaos on planet earth. However, on individual level chaos still exists for most.

Most people allow external forces and their own mind and emotions to control and dominate them. They are not the masters of their own world. For you to get control of your own world you need to adapt Self- Discipline. If you are successful with this, you will take control back. You will then find that you have a new reality that is built upon power. This power will be new for you. You will experience true freedom for this first time. Freedom from random events and impulses. Freedom from opinions, people and circumstances. For the first time, you will be the master of your world. You will be free.

Take Ownership

You have to take ownership of everything in your life. If you shift responsibility for what happens in your life to others, you will keep on losing. When you are not responsible for what happens in your life then it means you are a victim. Victims are not in control of their own lives. When you take ownership of everything you will take power back in your life.

Accept This as the Reality

Step one in changing your reality is to accept this as the reality of the majority of people out there. However, you have a choice. The choice is to get out of the Matrix (negative reality) and go after an ideal.

We have to go after an ideal. What does your ideal life look like? What is the perfect version of whatever you want to be? Think about your dream life and then go after it. It is our responsibility to step up and build a successful life. That is why we are here. If you want to elevate yourself above the masses of followers, then you have to go after an ideal.

What is the alternative? The alternative is going after a piece of

crap that makes you miserable. And guess what? If you fail in the thing you love, you will be better for it. But if you go after a life you hate and you fail you will be miserable. Then you will look back at your life with regret.

Staying in your comfort zone and not going after an ideal means conforming to a mediocrity that is breaking the souls of men around the world.

You have to create your own sense of belonging by going after your ideal life. As long as that ideal is ethical and of service to your fellow humans. Don't go after something stupid, unethical or illegal that will hurt other people. That is not going after an ideal; it's going after stupidity.

So how do we go after the ideal?

Creating The Best Version of Ourselves

As men, it's our duty to create the best versions of ourselves. By doing this, we serve not just ourselves but also our girlfriends, wives, partners, families, and society.

We can only be of service to the world when we go after our ideal. And this ideal is creating the best version of us.

When I talk about creating the best version of ourselves, I don't mean being a little angel and acting perfectly all the time. We will still make mistakes and screw up. That's part of being a man.

By being the best version of us means the following:

1. Finding your purpose- why are you here?

Finding your purpose has many benefits, but one important benefit is that it might lead you to live a longer life. A recent study at Carleton University in Canada found some interesting results.

1. After you got your purpose figured out, sit down make a plan on how you are going to go after your purpose
2. Step 3 is to go after this ideal you created with everything you have and not let anything or anyone get you off that purpose
3. Don't be realistic. I'm not saying do something stupid, but what you are dreaming might seem crazy or

unrealistic to other people, but don't let that stop you.

I know about a lot of people who were “unrealistic. “Henry Ford, The Wright Brothers, Thomas Edison, Steve Jobs, and many others. These guys decided they are going all in on life.

This type of independent thinking will be hard to cultivate, and you will meet a lot of resistance. But independent thinking is super important for creating the best version of you. We have to walk alone if we want to go live a life that is above the mediocre. People will go after you and criticize you when you put yourself out there, but that is part of the climb.

Superhero

Joe Rogan always talks about the idea of being “the hero in your own movie”. With that in mind ask yourself what will your hero do in this situation? Joseph Campbell also refers to similar ideas of heroes and ideals in his work. These types of archetypes are very powerful in keeping us motivated and moving us forward. In modern culture, we have forgotten to look at our past to find strength.

Warriors are not just people in the military or law enforcement. We are all warriors in a spiritual sense. We have to fight daily battles in our lives. At work in the boardroom, office and all other areas of life.

Creating a superhero version of you might sound weird, but it's a great way to start getting momentum. Going after this superhero ideal will elevate your life to the next level. In Asian cultures, this has been used for a very long time by warrior traditions to build confidence and strength.

1. Dream big because what is the alternative?

If we don't dream big then what else do we have? Do we just settle? Do we just go for the socially acceptable or mediocre? No!! We have a responsibility to go after what we want. Because when you are 80 years old, you will have to look yourself in the mirror and admit that you did not go for it.

Chapter 2. Staying Self-Disciplined

Beginning the journey of self-discipline can be somewhat simple, but staying committed to the path after you started can be challenging. Most people find that they have a high amount of energy, commitment, and motivation to get started with something new early on, but as time goes on, they find themselves struggling to remain motivated and committed. This happens because, over time, your brain wants to go back to engaging in your habitual activities rather than the new activities that you are trying to introduce to it. Those habitual activities are automatic, feel easy, and resemble comfort and familiarity, which are all things that your brain loves to experience.

When you find yourself being tugged back toward your habits, this is when you really need to lean into your self-discipline. This is when you need to focus even more on moving forward with your new discipline so that you can move beyond your habits and create new, healthier habits that support you in creating the lifestyle that you actually want to be living. The more you practice these new self-disciplined habits, the easier it will be, and the more you will find yourself adapting to your chosen way of life rather than your automatic way of life.

The Inevitable Reality of Failure

When you are afraid of failure, or when you have dealt with the sting of a moment of failure, it can be easy to come up against resistance and find yourself wanting to go back to doing things “the old way.” Failure can leave you with a number of overwhelming feelings ranging from rejection and embarrassment to disappointment and frustration. When you begin to feel this way, it can leave you feeling as though you need to cling back to what used to make you feel comfortable so that you are no longer being exposed to those painful triggers. The reality is, failure is only painful if you allow it to be.

Yes, even when you have a healthier perspective on failure, you are likely to feel things like embarrassment, rejection, disappointment, and frustration. However, those who are disciplined have learned to set a time limit on how long they are willing to let themselves sit with those feelings and have resolved to find a way to allow

themselves to move beyond those feelings after that time passes. As soon as that time frame passes, they will start looking into why the failure happened, what they can learn from it, and how they can apply those lessons to growing and doing better in the future.

Recognizing that failure is inevitable may not give you the opportunity to stop it from happening, but it will allow you to mentally and physically prepare for failure when it does take place. Plus, adjusting your mindset around failure early on can allow you to see things differently so that you are not so afraid of failure happening in the future. If you plan ahead and resolve to take control over the situation, failure does not have to remain so painful.

Give Yourself Time to Feel

When you are going through moments of resistance or failure, one of the most important things you can do for yourself is let yourself feel the feelings that come along with the situation that you are in. People who are self-disciplined have not reached a point where they suppress their feelings and refrain from ever engaging in any emotional-based experiences. In fact, anyone who does this should acknowledge that this is not a symptom of self-discipline but rather a symptom of a lack of self-discipline that stems from not knowing what to do with one's emotional state.

Giving yourself time to feel means that you are letting your body and mind work through the difficult emotions and thoughts that come with a painful situation so that you can let it go and move on in a healthier way. Self-disciplined people know that by feeling their feelings, they can bring closure into their life and, through that, they are able to leave those feelings and that situation behind them. Rather than bringing it with them, suppressing things, and later exploding out of nowhere or running into burnout, they move forward with a clear mind and a light heart.

When you do give yourself time to feel through things, it is important to do so in a self-disciplined and constructive way. For starters, you should never feel into your emotions to the point that you lose control over yourself and begin to act out on your emotions in an unhealthy manner. Doing so will result in greater feelings of resistance, shame, and disappointment later on, which can perpetuate the cycle and make it even worse. Find ways to

navigate your emotions in a healthy and productive manner so that you can release them without causing so much pain in your life and in your heart. Next, you need to make sure you have a rule around how long you let yourself deal with emotions. With failure, you should always give yourself anywhere from a couple of hours to a day or two to deal with your emotions. Then, you should resolve to move on and get going with your next course of action. This way, you have plenty of time to deal with your feelings but you do not find yourself trapped in those feelings or dwelling on things that are no longer important.

Create a Plan Within Your Plan

When you find yourself experiencing resistance or coming up against failure, you are going to need to find a way to get through it. People will often quit when they come up against resistance because they realize the plan they set in place will not work for them so, rather than trying again, they admit defeat and put down their flag. Rather than waving your white flag in defeat at the first sign of trouble, use this as an opportunity to practice being flexible and adapting to the unexpected.

Anytime you find yourself facing significant resistance, failure, or obstacles in your path, make a plan within your plan. Or, in other words, consider what your goal was and decide what you are going to do as your “Plan B” to get ahead to where you want to be. Allowing yourself to move forward with a plan B means that you will continue past any resistance and keep making progress toward your goals.

Just because you thought you were going to do things one way, and that way did not work out does not mean that you cannot continue to move forward in your life. You can continue to make progress by allowing yourself to be adaptable and flexible and to decide that your desire to reach your goals is bigger than any obstacle that could be placed on your path. You are stronger than that, and your ability to adapt and keep going is more powerful than you think. Keep practicing this flexibility and adaptability anytime you need to and, before you know it, you will have an easy time thinking on your feet and staying the course in the face of trouble because doing so will come naturally for you.

Remember Why You Started

One of the reasons you may be losing momentum and meeting resistance when you are trying to make a change through increasing your self-discipline is that you are not putting enough effort into recalling why you started this in the first place. Whenever you set a goal of any variety, regardless of how big or small that goal is, you need to do whatever you can to keep the goal in the front of your mind. Remembering why you got started in the first place can help energize you by giving you the same buildup of inspiration and momentum that it gave you when you first started on the journey of making changes.

Ideally, you should seek to remind yourself why you got started in the first place as many times as you possibly can, regardless of whether or not you are feeling resistance toward taking action. Keeping vision boards nearby and regularly engaging in visualization surrounding your goals is a great opportunity to keep yourself focused on what it is that you are working toward so that you can continue to increase your momentum over time. As you think about how exciting the end result will be and you continue to see yourself progressing toward it, that goal becomes more meaningful to you, and you begin to realize that it actually will become a reality if you stay the course. As a result, you are far more likely to keep working toward achieving that goal.

When you find yourself feeling resistance or experiencing doubt or negativity toward your goal, this is when you need to pull out all the stops. A person with self-discipline does not let things like doubt and negativity rise because they know that these feelings will only increase their resistance and prevent them from making progress toward their goals. Rather than allowing that to happen, they focus on surrounding themselves with even more visuals and inspiration reminding them as to why they got started in the first place. They will then expose themselves to the reminder so much that they rebuild the same level of excitement and then some and use that to get moving toward their goals all over again.

Resolve to Staying on Track

If you have tried everything and you are still feeling caught in a state of resistance, sometimes the best thing you can do is resolve to stay on track even if you don't feel like it. If you can see that your efforts are paying off and that you are making progress toward your goals, keep moving forward even when you are not really into it.

The more you continue to move forward, the sooner your inspiration and momentum will come back, and you will see that resistance fading away, allowing you to move forward full force all over again.

The truth is, the pursuit of your goals will not always be as exciting as those stages where you are full of momentum and inspiration, and it feels like all you want to do is work toward that specific goal. Sometimes, the pursuit of your goals is going to feel relaxed, boring, or even a little mundane as you realize that not every day can be as exciting and upbeat as the ones you look forward to. This does not mean that you will not be excited and upbeat again soon, nor does it mean that you have lost passion for your work, it simply means you are human and you are going through different emotions at that time.

If you find yourself feeling a deep lack of passion toward your goal for a long time and no amount of moving forward with it is bringing you into a state of excitement again, then you can start considering whether or not this is the goal for you to pursue. At that point, you may find that you need a subtle shift in the way you pursue it, or you may find that your passion now lies elsewhere and that you need to change your vision. It is okay to change, as long as you continue to exercise discipline, and you do not change your path before you are absolutely certain that this is what you want to do.

Get Back to the Basics

You are going to go through many phases in your life, and some of those phases are going to take you away from who you are and what you know. Some of those phases that take you away could be provoked by stress, while others could be provoked by curiosity. In either scenario, being led away from your path can lead to you feeling overwhelmed and disconnected from your original vision and your true goals. You may find yourself realizing that in the midst of stress, you gave up on something that was important to you, or that as you got excited and curious about something, you went deeper into a path of exploration than you meant to. Trust that no matter what the case is, it is perfectly fine and normal to find yourself removed from your authentic path from time to time. Finding yourself here is not a cause for concern; it is simply space where you can be reminded to come back to what you truly want

for yourself in life.

As soon as you realize you are away from your chosen path, use self-discipline to bring you back to the basics. Focus on getting your basic daily routine back in order and get close to the practices that helped get you on course with your authentic path in the first place. Getting back to the basics will help you reconnect with who you truly are and what you want to achieve and will bring you back to a centered state. From there, you can move forward in pursuit of your next leg of growth so that you can continue on toward your goals.

Keep Yourself Accountable

At various points in your life, you may find yourself settling back into a state of mind where you feel as though someone else should take responsibility for you, or where you feel like you are making “enough” progress and so there is no need to rush yourself. Slowing down from time to time is okay, especially when you are in need of a break, but getting complacent or completely falling off of your path to success is not a good idea. The only person who can get you back on track following an experience like this is yourself, which is why you absolutely must learn how to hold yourself accountable and keep yourself on track for success.

Holding yourself accountable can be done in incremental ways. By having multiple ways that you hold yourself accountable, you ensure that if you make intentional choices along the way that include resting or taking a break, you are not turning that break into an indefinite hiatus. Ideally, you should hold yourself accountable daily, weekly, monthly, every six months, and annually. Daily, you should be holding yourself accountable for necessary day to day tasks. Weekly, you should be reviewing your commitment to your tasks and helping yourself come up with ideas for how you can stay even more committed going forward. Monthly, you should be reviewing your weeks to see how much progress you have made and to consider adjustments you can make to your daily and weekly processes to improve your progress. Every six months you should be reviewing your goals to see how you are doing in terms of milestones and if you need to pivot or make any changes to your approach for where you are heading. Annually, you should be reviewing your past years’ goals to see how many you achieved and creating your goals for the coming year so that you have something to hold yourself accountable toward during that

coming year.

Chapter 3. Mental Toughness

There are many theories about the true nature of mental toughness, ranging from the ability to withstand pressure to the capacity to overcome self-doubt. While these are valid aspects, the true essence of mental toughness can best be understood by breaking it down to two main elements. The first element is the ability to endure and overcome negativity. This is the aspect that allows you to rise above such things as self-doubt, fear of failure and even procrastination. By developing the strength of mind to resist and overcome such negative thoughts and emotions, you will greatly increase your chances of success in every area of life.

The second element of mental toughness is the ability to embrace and utilize all the resources at your disposal. This includes input and ideas from other people, opportunities that arise unexpectedly and even delays that could be seen as negative by the less mentally strong. While resisting and overcoming negativity is a large part of success, being able to make the most of everything at your disposal is equally vital. Therefore, mental toughness is the strength of mind that not only overcomes the obstacles on your path to success, but also embraces and puts to use every potential tool and benefit that you encounter while pursuing your goals.

How Mental Toughness Can Help You To Achieve Your Long Term Goals

Any goal that is worth pursuing will require a great deal of time and effort to accomplish. Unfortunately, most people are accustomed to instant gratification, resulting in them abandoning projects that don't produce meaningful and satisfying results in a short period of time. Mental toughness will help you to develop a sense of stamina when it comes to pursuing your goals and chasing your dreams. This will enable you to stay the course for as long as it takes to achieve your desired outcome. Therefore, you will be able to keep going long past the point that most people give up due to a lack of immediate results.

The fact is that the longer the journey to accomplishing a goal, the more failures and setbacks you are likely to face. This is another reason why so few people are capable of fulfilling long term goals and dreams. Fortunately, when you develop mental toughness you

nurture the ability to rise above the failures and setbacks you encounter.

One reason for this is that you understand that any failure is merely a bump in the road, it isn't the end of the journey. Therefore, you know that once you overcome that failure you can return to the path that will eventually lead to your success. The other reason is that a mentally tough person uses failures and setbacks as learning opportunities. Rather than feeling defeated, you learn the lessons that are available, thus becoming better and stronger as a result of every failure you face. Subsequently, the longer the journey to achieving your goals, the better and stronger you become. This is one of the most critical aspects of mental toughness.

Benefits Of Mental Toughness In Business

Running a business can be a highly rewarding experience, however it can also be one of the most challenging experiences imaginable. There are an infinite number of things that can go wrong at any point in time, meaning that security is more fiction than reality. This is where mental toughness can make all the difference. When a person is mentally weak any and every challenge that arises can undermine their sense of confidence and commitment, causing them to become victims rather than victors. However, when you are mentally tough, you endure the challenges you face, acquiring the insights and experiences that such challenges provide. In the end, rather than fearing such challenges and unexpected events you actually invite them, recognizing their value in developing your mental toughness.

In addition to events that can prove challenging, every business has its fair share of people who are challenging. These people can be bosses, coworkers, subordinates or people outside your organization. Those who are mentally weak will allow negative people to have a detrimental impact on their business, creating all sorts of headaches and problems that only get worse with time. However, when you are mentally tough you are able to effectively manage the people you come into contact with. This means that you can diffuse volatile situations before they get out of hand, set higher standards in order to effectively overcome negativity and even bring out the best in people by being an example through your words and actions. Again, the difference is that mentally weak people will become the victims of negative people, whereas

mentally tough people become the victors.

The Benefits Of Mental Toughness In Times Of Hardship

There is perhaps no area in life where mental toughness is more valuable than that of hardship. Whether the hardship is the loss of a job, the loss of a loved one, or some natural disaster that sees a person's home destroyed, it can have devastating effects on anyone who doesn't possess the qualities of mental toughness.

When a person is mentally weak, they will allow such times of hardship to dictate the course of their lives. In the event that their home is destroyed, they will see that as the end of their way of life, becoming a sad shadow of the person they once were. Additionally, in the event of losing a loved one a mentally weak person will succumb to the depression and anxiety that such an event can cause. Needless to say, it is perfectly human to be devastated when you lose someone you love. However, that isn't to say that your life has to come to an end as well.

In contrast, someone who is mentally strong will rise above the hardship and sorrow and forge ahead, writing a new page in their lives. They will see the destruction of their home as a chance to start fresh, to find another place to live and begin a new life. In the case of losing a loved one, they will take the time to mourn the loss, fully expressing their grief and sorrow. However, they will then begin to live their life again in a way that would please the loved one they lost and that will benefit all others impacted by the loss.

In the end, that is one of the most significant factors separating the mentally tough from the mentally weak in times of hardship. Not only do the mentally tough seek to rise above hardship and restore meaning and success to their lives, they also strive to restore meaning and success to the lives of others equally affected by events. This is most true in the case of a parent who has to raise children single handedly after the loss of their spouse. It's no good for the children if that parent allows the loss to destroy their ability to live. Fortunately, a mentally tough person will find the strength to carry on, thereby providing a loving and happy life to their children who deserve the best after suffering such sorrow and loss. Therefore, the true mark of a mentally tough person is their ability to bring success not just to their own lives, but to the lives of those they touch as well.

How George Washington Exemplifies Mental Toughness

There are several people throughout history who have exemplified the attributes of mental toughness, but perhaps none have done so more completely than George Washington. While many people know of George Washington's career as a general in the Revolutionary War, and his subsequent role as first president of a free United States, most don't realize the struggle he faced to achieve those ends. In fact, many were the times when the success that is taken for granted today was almost turned into failure.

One way that Washington exhibited mental toughness is that he made the most of what he had. The truth is that the men under his command were raw recruits who had no military experience or training whatsoever. Even worse, the equipment they were given was old, unreliable and often far less than what was needed in terms of quantity. Despite such conditions, conditions that would have made a lesser man give up even before starting, Washington accepted the huge responsibility of leading his meager army against the most disciplined and professional soldiers in the world at the time. The ability to chase after success against all odds is a hallmark of someone who is truly mentally tough.

The second way Washington showed mental toughness was in his reaction to defeat. While he was victorious overall, the fact is that Washington and his men suffered numerous defeats on their path to success. While others would have seen such defeats as a reason to quit, Washington learned valuable lessons from each setback, making him more capable as a leader and a fighter as a result. Furthermore, he accepted defeat when it came, not allowing his pride to cause him to fight to the death, or perform some other feat that may have sounded heroic but that would have proven catastrophic to the cause. He mastered the art of withdrawing a beaten army so that they could survive and fight another day. This was one of the things that led to his eventual victory over the British.

Washington also showed great leadership in even the worst of conditions. This is yet another vital element of mental toughness. Rather than letting his rank define him, Washington ate with his men, marched with his men and camped with his men, something most other officers never even dreamed of doing. The result was that his men remained totally loyal in spite of even the worst

conditions they faced which included starvation, disease and freezing temperatures. Nevertheless, because Washington was willing to endure the same conditions, his men found the strength to endure, which gave them an edge over their more professional adversaries.

Then there is the element of turning setbacks into opportunities. Each time Washington had to retreat he took the opportunity to better train and equip the men he still had available. Furthermore, he took measures to improve supply chains, found help in the form of allies such as France, and even increased the health of his troops by employing cutting edge techniques such as vaccinations against smallpox. All of these things combined served to strengthen his army even in the aftermath of devastating defeat. In the end, every defeat only made Washington and his force more capable, which led to a string of victories that culminated in the defeat of the British.

Perhaps the greatest aspect of mental toughness that Washington showed was his rejection of power. He never allowed his position to change who he was, remaining a modest and honest person throughout. Furthermore, when all was said and done, he refused positions of power offered as a reward for his service. This includes the office of presidency, which he only took reluctantly in order to further serve his country. He retired after serving two terms, and many people believe that this was due to a law or statute restricting the time in office. The fact is that no such rule existed at the time, and Washington could have accepted the position for life if he had wanted to, but he refused, stating that he did not want to replace one King George with another. Such modesty in the face of immeasurable power and success is without doubt the crown jewel of all the attributes of mental toughness.

There is a reason why things aren't working your way, and it is related to your mental toughness. If someone were to ask you how you would describe your attitude and your passion towards the goals you have set for yourself, what would you say? Is your goal the only thing on your mind or is it something that you wish for? We all have plenty of wishes, and they won't come true until you devise a plan of action to make them come true. If you know that you are genuinely passionate about something, then your mindset towards it changes as well. You will automatically find the drive

and the necessary motivation to make your goal become a reality. You will see yourself putting in extra effort to achieve your goals. Have you ever come across a person who doesn't seem to have a lot of talent for something, but who seems to be good at it? Well, skill isn't everything. Passion and perseverance are equally necessary if you want to achieve the goal that you have set for yourself. Mental toughness is the deciding factor that distinguishes between those who are good and those who are great. It is an essential factor, and it can even outweigh any inherent talent.

Developing mental toughness is very important given that we are living in an extremely competitive world. There are certain traits that all those who are mentally tough seem to possess. They are highly motivated; they have a positive mindset, they have self-control, are aware of themselves, can deal well with pressure and are energetic. These people are dynamic and won't let anything or anyone hold them back. If you want to be successful in life, then you will need to develop a mental attitude that keeps you going. You need to make sure that you are trying your best and if things don't go your way, don't get disappointed. Instead, think of it as a learning opportunity and do everything that you can to make sure that you achieve your goals. Learn to adapt yourself to the situation and don't let your emotions get the better of you. If you have a goal or a dream that you want to achieve, then you will have to start making a plan and take the necessary action to achieve it. Come up with a plan of action and don't let anything in between you and your goal. Be flexible and don't be rigid. Put in all the effort that you can and then some more. Keep going and don't give up.

Chapter 4. NLP and Manipulation

At the point when you think of control, you consider somebody who thinks just about his very own needs, an individual who puts his responsibility for that of others. For example, babies, who are normally self-centered and persuaded of their supremacy, can be incredible controllers. They're canny enough to have made sense of Mom or Dad's hot catches, and they'll push those catches tenaciously to get precisely what they need.

Numerous grown-ups develop out of this kind of control. However, some don't. One of my friends concedes that she utilizes her emotions to twist others to her will. She essentially hasn't made sense of elective ways that would be progressively lovely for her and the remainder of us! to get what she needs.

Contrasted with manipulation, the influence is regarded to have an increasingly positive implication that mulls over others' needs and wants. As guardians, we need to impact our children to be sound and safe. As companions, we need to impact our companions to happy and satisfied. As entrepreneurs, we need to impact our customers to be fruitful and prosperous. We need what is best for those in our range of prominence.

The concept of influence has numerous segments. It depends on solid affinity, clear and harmonious correspondence, and mindfulness and comprehension of others. We, as a whole, normally have these essential capacities somewhat. Be that as it may, similar to all aptitudes, we can figure out how to be better.

Back to the mallet. If you need to construct a house, don't you need the best hammer you can get? Would you ever think, "No doubt, I need to construct a house, yet I'm not going to utilize instruments." Would you stress that "if you use apparatuses to manufacture the house and figure out how to utilize them appropriately, would that be an unreasonable preferred position?" obviously not! If you need to be a successful influencer, NLP is perhaps the best instrument you can learn.

Would someone be able to figure out how to utilize a mallet to cause destruction? Absolutely. Might they be able to utilize NLP to control? That's right. In any case, through experience, that is

extremely uncommon while gaining the NLP skills, there is an emphasize of the moral utilization of everything being equal. In all actuality, there is no "mind control" apparatus (except for extraordinary indoctrinating procedures) somebody could use to cause someone else to accomplish something unsuitable to their convictions or qualities.

The book does not advocate for negative manipulation that will leave the other person drained and empty, while you gain what you want for your benefit. That will be destroying your relationships with people.

On the other hand, as much as we advocate for positive manipulation, we are aware that you do not have control of the people who aim at causing negative manipulation. In the following section, we shall look at some of the cautious activities that you can look out for to take note of a negative manipulator.

Spotting negative manipulation techniques

I have had a wide range of individuals endeavor to "NLP" me into accommodation, including various individuals I've worked for over expanded timeframes, and even individuals I've been involved with. Thus, I've built up an entirely sharp insusceptible reaction to it. I've likewise examined its mechanics intently, generally to oppose the drivel of said individuals. Here's a couple of key strategies I've gotten.

Be very careful about individuals replicating your non-verbal communication.

In case you're conversing with someone who might be into NLP, and you see that they're sitting in the very same manner as you, or reflecting how you have your hands, test them by causing a couple of developments and checking whether they to accomplish something very similar. Talented NLPers will be greater at covering this than more up to date ones. However, more current ones will, in every case, quickly duplicate a similar development. This is a decent time to call individuals on their poop.

Move your eyes in unpredictable movements at random times

This is cracking comical to do to troll NLPers. Particularly in the underlying phases of affinity acceptance, an NLP client will give

extraordinarily close consideration to your eyes. You may believe this is because they're strongly keen on what you're stating. They are, yet not because they care about your musings: They're watching your eye developments to perceive how you store and access data. Shortly, they'll not exclusively have the option to tell when you're lying or causing something to up, they'll additionally have the option to make sense of what parts of your mind you're utilizing when you're talking, which would then be able to lead them to be so enlightened to what you're feeling that they nearly appear to be having some sort of mystic understanding into your deepest considerations. A cunning hack for this is simply to haphazardly dash your eyes around—admire the right, to one side, side to side, down, cause it to appear to be characteristic, however, do it arbitrarily and with no example. This will drive an NLP individual completely nuts since you'll be losing their adjustment.

Try not to give anyone a chance to contact you.

This is truly evident and sort of abandons saying when all is said in done. Be that as it may, suppose you're having a discussion with someone you know is into NLP, and you end up in an increased passionate state possibly you start snickering extremely hard, or get extremely furious, or something comparative and the individual you're conversing with contacts you while you're in that state. They may, for example, tap you on the shoulder. What simply occurred? They moored you with the goal that later if they need to return you to the state you were simply in, they can (or so the wayward rationale of NLP directs) contact you in a similar spot. Simply resemble, goodness hellfire no, you didn't.

Be careful about dubious language.

One of the essential methods that NLP noted is the utilization of obscure language to actuate sleep-inducing daze. Erickson found that the more ambiguous language is, the more it drives individuals into a stupor because there is less than an individual is subject to differ with or respond to. Then again, increasingly explicit language will remove an individual from a stupor.

Be careful about lenient language.

Words like, do not hesitate to unwind." "You're free to test drive this vehicle if you like it." "You can appreciate this as much as you can

imagine." Watch the f*k out for this. This was a significant understanding of pre-NLP trance specialists like Erickson: the most ideal approach to get someone to accomplish something, including going into a daze, is by enabling them to give you consent to do as such. Along these lines, gifted trance inducers will never order you inside and out to accomplish something, for example, "Go into a daze." They will make statements like, "Don't hesitate to become as loose as you can imagine."

Trust your instinct.

What's more, the principal and essential standard: If your gut reveals to you someone is screwing with you, or you feel uneasy around them, trust it. NLP individuals quite often appear "off," dodgy, or like trade-in vehicle sales reps. Escape, or solicitation, they show you the regard of not making a difference NLP systems while interfacing with you.

Mind control

Mind control methods are one thing and can be seductive and harmful depending on their use. For different people mean different things. These are also classified as coercive persuasion, brainwashing, change of thought, coercion, and seduction.

All the above terms have common features, particularly those that describe mental control. Nevertheless, each person refers to motivation and explicit or implicit control in a person's mind to take on a particular role. Then we will describe it in a reasonable amount of time and identify much of its strategies. Therefore, we'll ask you who needs to use them.

Could you change other people's minds? Can other people keep your mind under control? One common concern is that people can manipulate others' minds without understanding them. This has contributed to the word mental control being typically found in theories, where anything from states to aliens is accused of controlling our ideas. The opinions of others can, of course, be affected, often strongly. Yet making them dance like marionettes for each wish seems highly unlikely.

Techniques of mind controls

Some techniques are normally used for mind controls. It does not just happen; there is a process that you, as an individual, should be

aware of. Let us take a look.

In this section, we will examine some genuine mind control procedures that were customarily utilized by common individuals in personal connections as well as in gatherings.

The act of isolation

Physical disengagement can be extremely strong; however, in any event, when physical separation is not possible or not down to earth, controllers will regularly endeavor to confine you rationally. This might be accomplished in various manners from multi-week courses in the nation to condemning your family and friend network. Constraining some other impact by controlling the data stream is a definitive objective.

Having Criticism

Understand that criticism might be utilized as a disconnection tool. The controllers will ordinarily talk in terms of being them against others' terms, condemn the outside world, and guarantee their very own prevalence. As indicated by them, you should feel fortunate to be related to them.

Social evidence and pressure from peers

The individuals who endeavor to control enormous gatherings of individuals will normally utilize social evidence and companion strain to mentally program newcomers. Social evidence is a mental wonder where (a few) individuals expect that the activities and convictions of others are suitable and, because "everybody does that," must be legitimized. This works particularly well when an individual isn't sure what to think, how to carry on, or what to do. Many individuals in such circumstances will take a gander at what others do and do likewise.

Is it possible to have positive manipulation?

No one wants to be negatively manipulated. Whether it's personal or academic life, the thought of being manipulated is usually something bad. Many of us equate it with negative associations, such as people who are trying to use us or drive people to do things we do not want to do. Have you ever even worried about the possibility of positive change manipulation? Today, we're going to look at how sometimes manipulation is a great thing as shocking as it sounds. Manipulation has already been happening all around.

Whether you know or not, in your professional and personal life, you are very likely to be exploited every day. Marketers and corporations around the world promote and unleash the power of coercion to get us to buy certain things and to live our lives in the same way.

Buy this shoe label.

Feed on more vegetables. Plant more crops.

Free from cigarettes.

Support this political party. Vote that.

What are the good and bad cases of manipulation? Would it be wrong to persuade people to abandon cigarettes or to follow a healthier lifestyle, or can we interpret it as something positive?

Good leaders are often searching for ways to involve and inspire their staff. It is an essential part of staff career development, with a lot of benefits both for individuals and companies.

Positive management of your employees can be an effective management tool. Using a constructive form of manipulation to inspire workers to achieve their objectives will help improve their performance and encourage teams to achieve the goals of the organization.

A scholar sums up the gaps between persuasion and manipulation, saying it lies in all of these three things: the intention underlying the effort to convince that person Authenticity and honesty The net benefits or effect on that individual. Always have a conversation with yourself, reflecting on your intention of wanting to manipulate people and how truthful and transparent is your process. You should know whether or not the actions were for that individual's good.

As a boss or employer, it's important to preserve your beliefs and always have an ethical impact on your workers. This form of good manipulation is often used by non-profit organizations and ethics firms to try to persuade individuals to act, support others in need, and promote positive changes in the world. There is a discussion in an essay about controlling people for good that individuals can alter human behavior. But you may be wondering what is the way this energy can be used? How do you use psychology to ethically convince people? Non-profit and non-governmental organizations

use persuasion to draw donations and raise money and increase awareness of critical issues that require action and reform.

Dread of estrangement

The new members of the manipulative gatherings will, for the most part, get a warm greet and will shape various new companionships that appear to be a lot further and more important than anything they have ever experienced. Later on, if any questions emerge, these connections will turn into an integral asset to hold them in the gathering. Regardless of whether they aren't persuaded, the life in the outside world may appear to be somehow lonely.

Reiteration

Consistent redundancy is another ground-breaking influence instrument. Even though it might appear to be too simplified to possibly be powerful, yet rehashing the same message, again and again, makes it natural and simpler to be remembered. At the point when reiteration is joined with social confirmation, it conveys the message without failure.

The presence of personal growth techniques is another confirmation of the power of repetition and its. If you can convince yourself through reiteration, odds are somebody may endeavor to utilize redundancy to control you into speculation and carrying on with a specific goal in mind.

Tiredness

Being tired and lack of sleep can bring about physical and mental tiredness. At the point when you are physically worn out and less alert, you are increasingly defenseless to influence. A study referenced in the Journal of Experimental Psychology shows that people who had not rested for just 21 hours were increasingly helpless to the recommendation.

Framing new personality

At last, controllers need to re-characterize your personality. They need you to quit acting naturally and become a robot, somebody who thoughtlessly pursues their requests. Utilizing all strategies and mind-control systems referenced above, they will endeavor to remove an admission from you — some type of affirmation that you accept that they are great individuals accomplishing something to be thankful for (slight varieties are conceivable). At the outset, it

may be something immaterial like concurring that the individuals from the gathering are fun and cherishing individuals or that a portion of their perspectives are, in reality, substantial. When you acknowledge that one seemingly insignificant detail, you might be progressively prepared to acknowledge another and afterward another and another. Before you know it, out of wanting to be steady with what you do and say, you start recognizing as one of the gatherings. This is especially amazing on the off chance that you realize that your admissions were recorded or shot, just before you overlook it, there is a physical verification of your new character.

How do you succeed in manipulating peoples mind

The use of hypnotism is a powerful tool. In less than a minute, a professional hypnotist could bring somebody in motion to get someone to take care of his suggestions.

In counseling, entertainment, marketing, and even seduction, hypnosis can be used. If someone is hypnotized for treatment or entertainment, it is easy to be conscious of it and even allow the hypnotizer to trance.

It takes a completely different, persistent bag of tricks to hypnotize people in a conversational context, to get them to obey your advice without realizing that you use your "unique abilities" on them.

It is what it is called hypnosis of covertness and communication. This is the tactic used by master salesmen, leaders, and seduction specialists to get people to do everything they desired. Such hypnotic methods are so effective that they could even seem to manipulate the brain.

You may be concerned about how this hypnosis secret work?

The very first step you should do is to link to the person you want to hypnotize; this connection is called "analysis" by some. This state of compatibility with the subject must be preserved. This can be done orally and with the correct body language. When done correctly, the subject experiences a profound psychological bond with the hypnotic.

First, increasing the reporting status.

Once you find a source with and have a relationship with the subject, the next move is to strengthen this sense of confidence and comprehension, thus increasing any mental protections and

becoming more receptive to suggestions.

Create a connection first.

Once you have a strong connection with the subject, it's time to inject secret recommendations into his unconscious, which is also called embodied instructions. There you "ask" whatever you want him to do, but you could just "tell" him as you do during a typical session of hypnosis.

Critical thinking will be triggered by being responsive and clear to suggestions. Critical thinking will increase the defenses and barriers of the natural mind, and block direct orders you send him.

So how do you propose the topic once you have them in your spell?

You do this with metaphors and orders embodied. So, what does that mean exactly? Hypnotic symbols or sequences are hypnotic documents specifically designed. To circumvent critical thinking obstacles, they use hypnotic scripts and send suggestions or orders directly to the unconscious. This tricks the audience into thinking that we take something trivial when we are speaking about something else, which is the real meaning of the metaphor.

Chapter 5. Overthinking

Many times, communication is one of the main factors in the misunderstandings that occur between people in relationships. We say one thing, but it is understood in a different way. This complication is made worse when we fall into the habit of overthinking, which is simply taking in and processing way more information than is necessary to complete a given task or figure out a problem. When we pull from a much larger pool of information than is necessary for what we are trying to do, whether it's something as simple as picking out the appropriate tie or deciding whether to break up with that new boyfriend, we are guilty of overthinking and often make the task much harder on ourselves than it needs to be.

All those thoughts swirling around in your brain make even the simplest tasks difficult because it becomes nearly impossible to avoid distraction. Overthinking can lead to an emotionally damaging mindset, where you begin to think negatively about yourself, your loved ones, or even about the world. Too much negativity and worry in your mind will shut out any hope of positive thinking or finding the path toward becoming a more positive, productive person.

I am excited to take this journey with you, and I know that you are about to discover many things about yourself as a person. The simple fact that you've sought out help from this book is an important first step forward. Many people continue through their entire lives living with the chaos going on inside their minds while they try to seek out a pleasant existence. But we're going much further than this. We're going to shed that old chaotic mindset and find the path to clarity.

The title of this book refers to finding a path through the noise inside your mind, but we're not just going to walk casually by and leave the chaos where it is. Many people are very skilled at something called "compartmentalization." This is where, in order to deal with many sources of stress, worry, and overthinking, people will carefully store different thought processes in different parts of their brains and train themselves to ignore one thing while they concentrate on another. Many men and women experience this after

a trauma. In order to escape the grief, they will concentrate on something that is productive, like their jobs, and not think about the pain that must be worked through.

Compartmentalization is an avoidance of the problem, and though it can be helpful in traumatic experiences, it is essential to address what is going on in our minds if we are to move past it. So, if you're ready, let's get started!

What Causes Overthinking?

There are many, many causes of overthinking, many catalysts that trigger the bad habits of overthinking which can lead to anxiety and excessive worrying. These are not pleasant emotions, and what can seem like simply being careful and thinking things through can easily turn into something much more serious and damaging.

We've all experienced worry at some point in our lives. I remember when I was a child, my mother would leave the house very early in the morning to go to work at the post office, and I would wake up just as she was walking out the door and feel a desperate need to run out to the front door and catch her so I could say goodbye and "I love you." This didn't last long, but I remember for a few nights I was overcome by the worry that she was going to leave the house and I would never see her again. This is easily attributable to me being a young child but let us think about another example.

You are an adult, and your older brother is flying out to Colorado for a ski trip with his friends. He's just turned 21, and you know that there is going to be a good deal of partying and drinking going on. Now you start worrying about all the things that could happen. What if he gets in an accident driving around an unfamiliar area? Would he be tempted to drink and drive? What if he falls while skiing and breaks a leg or an arm? What if he runs into a tree and has a concussion and he goes to a hospital and I don't know about it because he doesn't have his phone and...and...and...

Okay, so this is an extreme case of acute worry, but I'm sure you know what I'm talking about and have experienced something similar concerning a loved one. To throw a wrench in the works, let's say you just watched a video on Facebook where someone ran right into a tree while skiing a few days ago. Now you have this mental image to feed those worries running through your mind like

a broken record. Perhaps you saw a story about a car accident in Colorado caused by bad weather, and now you have that worry going through your mind.

An occasional bout of worry is perfectly normal, but when a person's life becomes plagued by constant worry about things that could happen without a good reason or basis, that person may be suffering from anxiety. There are different forms of anxiety, but two of the most common forms are social and generalized.

We may think of anxiety as a chronic form of overthinking, and many people experience such intense anxiety that they choose to take medication to assuage this feeling. Generalized anxiety applies to everyday experiences which most people get through without trouble. Some people describe the feeling as a "fear of everything." Generalized anxiety affects day-to-day life and manifests as intense worry and fear of things like leaving the house, going to the grocery store, your loved ones' health, what will happen in the world, possibility of war, whether you are eating right, whether you might be sick with serious disease and not know it. Some people suffer from a specific phobia, but generalized anxiety tends to react to many different things at once and can become overwhelming.

You may have experienced some form of anxiety while you began to recognize the habit of overthinking. The first step to address overthinking is to figure out the causes that are specific to you. There are many causes to explore and you will learn as we discuss several of them, even if they don't all apply to you. Hopefully, as you read through this list, you will be able to pinpoint which factors may be playing the biggest role in your overthinking.

Social Expectation

Living and working in the world today is more demanding and challenging than ever before. Yes, we have the modern conveniences that make life more comfortable and convenient, but we also must contend with the structure of social life and the expectation that we follow a timeline that follows something like this: school, more school, entry-level career, climb the ladder, senior-level career, retirement.

For a long time, this was the norm for people living in countries of economic power. But a lot has been shifting over the course of the last few decades, and at an exponentially increasing rate. Finding a

job in a lucrative career that will be enjoyable and satisfying for thirty or more years is not so simple anymore. The competition has grown right alongside the earth's population and the staggering advancement of technology. Many of the jobs readily available to our parents no longer exist, and nowadays, you would get a strange look for physically walking into a business and asking for an employment application instead of applying online. If you do manage to get that dream job right out of high school or college, then the real trial by fire begins. We could talk office politics, competition, and rivalry all day, but for right now, let's focus on some of the core triggers for overthinking in two of life's most influential domains: work and school.

We've started to discuss the challenge of finding gainful employment as a young adult in the modern age, so let's continue exploring where overthinking may come into play here.

Following the effect of globalization, the world is now overrun with advertisement and marketing schemes. From the very beginning of your career, you've been told that you will have to compete with many other candidates, many of whom may be more qualified than you. The interview process challenges candidates to make a compelling argument for why they should stand out above all the rest. You may practice in front of a mirror at home or think about all the possible questions that may come up. It is here when you may start thinking about how you measure up next to others in your field. You've just graduated from college with a degree and, at the time, you felt like you were on top of the world with a million different prospects awaiting you (best case scenario, of course). Fast forward a few months, and you start to realize that the job market is a tad more competitive than you thought, and you haven't proven yourself to be a shoo-in to some of your dream companies who have already passed on you. Many young adults in the millennial generation can attest to the challenges of having graduated during a recession in the US and having trouble finding any reasonable employment at all, let alone a prestigious start to a career in their fields.

The pressure of the social expectation that you can and will find a great job if you are smart and work hard enough becomes a great burden if and when things don't work out the way you'd imagined them throughout your time in school. At this point, you may begin

to wonder if it is some fault or deficiency within yourself keeping you from your dreams.

The truth is, there are countless factors at play when it comes to finding or landing your “dream job,” and sometimes, hard work and a positive attitude are just not enough, despite what your parents or teachers told you. This is why many young adults begin the cycle of overthinking that is dominated by questions of self-worth and adequacy. If society says I’m supposed to be here or there at this point in my life, that means I’ve failed and there is something wrong with me.

Once this conviction takes root, it is very hard to ignore the myriad images, slogans, and advertisements all around us which display the ideal professional man or woman in their nice corner offices, dressed in the latest fashions, sharing how they’ve made it this far because they work for this or that company, attended this or that school, bought this or that car, bought a house in this or that city, etc. This is when you may start to compare yourself to the success of others, which simply adds to the merry-go-round in your mind that feeds a feeling of inadequacy and low self-esteem.

But now let’s say you’ve landed a decent job. It’s not your dream job, but it may be a good start for you and your career. Now it’s time to prove yourself. You immediately look around at your coworkers, boss, and peers to assess where you are on the ladder and how you measure up to your competition. Depending on the type of personalities surrounding you, you may feel a lot of pressure to do well and grow within the company. Society teaches us that being the best is the only way to grow and climb within your company, so professional life instantly turns into a competition. This pressure may manifest itself as overthinking every day as you constantly analyze how well you do your job. This is not a bad thing in and of itself—everyone wants to be good at their jobs. A problem arises when we begin obsessively comparing ourselves to others, and when the job is no longer an environment of several likeminded people working to build a better company, but a cutthroat competition to the top.

Once you’ve managed to break into the top echelons of business society, the competition turns toward other companies in your field—overtaking their market, putting others out of business, etc. And we’ve all heard the saying, the more you gain, the more you have to

lose. This opens up a whole new avenue of worry and overthinking as you assess how far you may fall if you make a mistake or fall off the ladder!

Is this you? Do you experience constant worry about where you are professionally? Maybe you are underemployed and feel embarrassed, like you haven't gone far enough in life as you compare yourself to others. This may be one of the most common triggers for overthinking, but now it's time to move backward in time to examine how social expectation first takes root in our minds as kids. Let's take a look at social expectation in school.

As kids, most of us aren't thinking seriously about what happens after school. We may have some far-fetched dreams swirling in our brains, but mostly we just want to know what mom packed for lunch today and if that big kid is going to knock us off the swing at recess again today. (Hopefully not, but you get the idea.)

As we grow older and enter the realms of middle school and high school, social pressure and expectation become more central to our lives in an immediate sense. We may be thinking of our future careers from a distance, but most of us are preoccupied with whether or not people like us at school, how popular we are, whether or not we'll get a date for the dance, etc. Much of the social pressure at this age centers around physical appearance and either academic or competitive achievement. Sadly, most girls around this age start to become overly concerned about their physical appearance and may even begin to equate this with their self-worth. The trigger for overthinking has begun as these women look around at the beautiful women in social media and in magazines, and begin comparing themselves to those unattainable ideals. Similarly, young boys may have a role model in sports or even a father figure who has become very successful in their professional fields and begin comparing themselves as men, equating success in competitive sports or popularity or academics with their self-worth.

The pressure only gets stronger as we enter college, if that is your path. Balancing social life with academic life is a struggle that many lose, resulting in a student dropping out of college. Remaining focused and achieving good grades and that long-awaited bachelor's degree grants passage into the realm of professional work, where a

whole new world of social pressure and expectation awaits.

As you can see, much of our overthinking may very well stem primarily from a distorted perception of ourselves in relationship to others in our professional or social environments. This pressure begins early in life and continues as we are constantly bombarded with images and messages in the media dictating what success should look and feel like.

Let's take a look at some more possible triggers for overthinking.

Social Media

We are all familiar with the recent rhetoric surrounding how everyone is getting addicted to social media. Many of us can't go more than an hour without checking Facebook or our Twitter feeds to see what's new and who liked our latest posts, etc. What you may not realize is that addiction to social media is a powerful source of overthinking. We've discussed such habits as comparing ourselves to others throughout our lives. One of the easiest ways to cultivate this habit is through social media.

When we look at a friend's Facebook page, odds are, we are seeing the pretty, superficially imposed perfect life that they want us and others on the internet to see. We see pictures of people that seem like they are off-the-cuff. But most people take a lot of time preparing their selfies, positioning themselves just right. Many women put on makeup then mess around with the filters until they present the most ideal versions of themselves they can imagine. You don't see the challenges and stress in that person's life, you just see what they want you to see. This can lead to many of us, once again, comparing our lives to the lives of others who seem prettier, more successful, happier, richer, etc. Those negative feelings like jealousy and self-doubt creep up on us again, just like they did when we were younger and comparing ourselves to the prom queen or the football captain.

All of these thoughts build up over time, and eventually, they may take control, leading to a negative and self-destructive habit of overthinking.

Now that we've pinpointed some of the major triggers for overthinking, let's take a look at the phenomena that all that internet surfing and Facebook scrolling contribute to—information overload.

Chapter 6. Procrastination

Procrastination is a term that has been there for centuries. It indicates that the problem is something that goes way back. Socrates and Aristotle, the ancient Greek Philosophers, used the word *Akrasia* to describe the habit of procrastination. *Akrasia* means acting against your judgment. In other words, you chose to do something even when you know that you should be spending that time doing something else.

To define procrastination, you can say that it is delaying a task or a set of tasks to some other time. Therefore, you can use the term *Akrasia* or procrastination, and they all refer to that force that prevents you from following through on what you are supposed to be doing in the first place.

For instance, if you are supposed to write a report for your company's annual review, you keep postponing it, and instead, you spend so much of that time surfing the internet, chatting with friends or shopping online among other things.

The problem with this is that this often stands in the way of you pursuing goals that matter. In such a case, you may tarnish your reputation at work or even end up getting fired. Other negative impacts of procrastination include; high levels of stress, anxiety, and depression, among other mental health issues.

The psychological phenomenon of procrastination

Procrastination is a phenomenon that lies in the heart of the psychological understanding of goal attainment. One thing that you have to understand is that, for you to attain your goals, you have to be motivated and capable of performing all necessary tasks that satisfy the goal. Particularly, procrastination is a subject that is relevant to industrialized cultures that emphasize adherence to schedules.

Even though so many researchers argue that procrastination is a modern phenomenon, so many concepts similar to this have been in existence for ages. The ancient Egyptians also used words that related to procrastination. Procrastination was used in the 17th century, as indicated in the Oxford dictionary. During this time, it was used to describe certain situations in which people chose to

restrain from their habits with intelligence just so that they could arrive at better inferences. It was not until the 18th century that the negative consequences of procrastination were discussed.

Why we procrastinate: Causes of procrastination

It is one of the most important questions when it comes to addressing the negative impact that procrastination has on our lives and attainment of our goals. According to statistics, it is estimated that at least 1/5th of adults in the world procrastinate. Also, 50% of students in the world are victims of procrastination.

One longitudinal study indicates that procrastination is a self-defeating habit that has short term benefits, but in the long term, the impact is detrimental. Which begs the question, why do we procrastinate? While further research will help in unpacking the complexity of this behavioral pattern, we all agree that each person has a unique reason for procrastinating tasks. The only cure to this is for us to respond to the reasons specific to you as an individual.

Here are some of the common causes of procrastination:

Tossing self-compassion to the wind

According to one journal on Self-Identity, researchers reported that people with less self-compassion were highly likely to be more stressed when performing tasks. In effect, increases their chances of postponing them to other times.

To overcome this, it is important that you understand the impact that this has on your personality and your reputation. Take time to have some serious self-talk with yourself while ensuring that you exercise kindness. One of the things that you have to come to terms with is that you are human and maintain optimism in everything instead of going down the road of negative criticism.

Learning procrastination from role models

Well, so many people procrastinate because that is what they have seen their role models do time and time again. It can be your parents, friend, or siblings, among others. If the person that you admire most is a victim of procrastination, the chances are that you will ape their behavior by putting off important tasks.

It is critical that you spend some time talking to yourself on the negative impact that these role models might have faced as a result of their procrastination. Then ensure that you review all other

options for new role models who are always willing to act and reap positive outcomes because of it.

Thinking that you will not be effective in the task

Sometimes, the reason you procrastinate is that you think that you are not skilled enough or well cut out for the task at hand. If you feel that your skills are inadequate, get an upgrade by taking several courses or having someone to teach you the ropes. If you need guidance and help from an expert, go for it.

Sometimes, you will realize that you have the skills but are afraid to fail. One thing that you have to understand is that the primary element of success lies in your mindset. Rather than allowing negative self-talk and thoughts convince you otherwise, begin to turn those thoughts into positive ones. Use positive affirmations like "I can do it; I am qualified to do this" among others.

No one is perfect. However, you have to be willing to give yourself a chance to try and learn as you go. You have to step out of your comfort zone so that you can tap into your growth mindset. You will be surprised just how smart and equipped you are!

Bias over certain tasks

The other reason may be that there are certain tasks you like doing while there are those that you feel unmotivated about. It explains the reason why you find yourself saying, "I can do most things, but not this one."

Well, the truth is, you can do it, you just have bias over what you find enjoyable and what is not. The best thing you can do is to challenge yourself to do it. Have an open mind and prove your bias wrong. It is essential that you use that opportunity to prove that voice within you wrong and work towards combating that bias once and for all.

Estimation of time is a little off

Sometimes, when you are given a task or assignment to do, you may estimate that you will take five days to complete it. However, you fail to put into perspective all the details of the task and how that will impact on time. This is what is often referred to as planning fallacy.

Rather than just putting time on a task, it is important that you make it a habit to start each task as soon as you get it so that you

have adequate time to solve every problem and seek clarifications where necessary. This will help compensate for time deficiencies. Once you complete the task successfully, reward yourself. It not only motivates you to make it a culture completing tasks beforehand, but also helps you become a better planner.

Focusing less on future gains and more on present gains

This is what is referred to as short-range hedonism in rational emotive behavior therapy (REBT). When you chose to focus on your present and all the tasks therein, there is a high likelihood that you develop low frustration tolerance. In other words, when tougher situations and tasks face you, the chances are that you will not be able to endure.

It is critical that you remind yourself to always look at the bigger picture in every situation. This will help you bring into perspective all the future gains you stand to enjoy hence deemphasizing on present frustrations.

Being too much of a perfectionist

One thing that you need to bear in mind is that you are not perfect, and so is anything you do. When you look at a task at hand and think that it has to be perfect, then you each time you start to work on it, you feel that it does not meet your "set high standards." This, in turn, keeps you from making any progress at all.

Therefore, it is critical that you diminish the importance of performing tasks with perfection in mind. Instead, emphasize on giving each task the importance and urgency it deserves. This way, you will perform each task to your level best and complete it promptly. To make this more effective, create two lists: one of the examples of tasks when perfectionism has been helpful; and another when timely completion has been helpful.

Anxiety and depression

If there is anything I have learned over the years is that when you are overly anxious or depressed, the chances are that your concentration, motivation, and perseverance will be significantly diminished. It means that your performance is affected and completion of tasks will not be completed within the agreed upon time.

If you are depressed, the very first thing that you should do is seek

medical attention or seek the help of a professional therapist. It will go a long way in helping to rule out any physical causes to your anxiety so that you can get the proper treatment you need to stay focused and achieving your goals. You will also learn tricks on how to break your tasks into smaller micro-goals that you can complete and eventually contribute to the attainment of the bigger task/goal.

Having discomfort intolerance

This often is the reason why you are disengaged from the task(s) at hand. According to REBT, procrastination is thought to arise from a belief that one should always avoid discomfort. It means that each time you feel that you are uncomfortable both physically and mentally, you simply practice procrastination.

Well, the truth is, if you keep doing this, the chances are that you will stagnate in life and miss your window of opportunity and let success slide. The trick is for you to challenge yourself withstand as much discomfort as possible, starting from less discomfort and gradually progressing to the end.

Additionally, always see it as a chance to encourage yourself to engage in various tasks even if it is only for a short while. Pay attention to the long-term reward that awaits you once you have persevered. If you stick with that in mind, you will realize that discomfort will slowly contribute to your growth and change your mindset to have the “I can do” mentality.

The Procrastination-Action Line

One important thing that you have to notice is that you cannot depend on long-term consequences and rewards to stay motivated. In other words, it is important for you to find a way to visualize future rewards in the present time. It simply means that you have to be willing to make future rewards and punishments applicable in the present time.

Let us consider the report writing for your Company's annual review we just highlighted. The truth is, you have known about the report for a couple of weeks, but you chose to put it off. You must have felt a rush of adrenaline (pain) each time you thought about the report and the fact that you have not done it yet, but then you chose to do nothing about it. Suddenly, the deadline date is here, and the future consequences can now be felt in the present. What you did was you allowed procrastination to escalate to the point

where it crossed the "Action line."

It is important to understand that, the moment you crossed the action line, pain begins to reduce. When you are in the middle of procrastinating, the pain is high as compared to when you are in the middle of work.

In the above graph, it is evident that Point A is much more painful than when you are at point B. In other words, when you keep postponing tasks, the chances are that you will experience heightened levels of shame, anxiety, and shame. What is even more interesting is the fact that these emotions are much higher than the effort that would have otherwise been spent getting work done.

Note that, the problem is not getting the work done; it is starting the work in the first place. If you want to stop postponing things, it is critical that you make it easy for yourself to trust that once you get started, motivation and momentum will follow suit.

Chapter 7. Stoicism

Stoicism is one of the four schools of philosophy that began in ancient Athens. It started alongside Aristotle's Lyceum, Plato's Academy as well as Epicurus's Garden.

The school of stoicism was founded in 300 BC Greece by Zeno of Citium and is heavily influenced by the teachings of Socrates.

During this time in Greece, Stoicism was immensely popular and flourished for several hundreds of years as a way to live by the different people of diverse backgrounds in Greece. Because of its philosophy, stoics were considered to be cold, passive and stone like figures.

Like all the other schools of philosophy, Stoicism enjoyed popularity 250 years ago, especially among the Romans, attracting a stream of admirers from Emperor Marcus Aurelius to the statesman Seneca to the ex-slave Epictetus. These famous Stoics have written books and journals and notes that have now come into the possessions of modern civilization.

The great thing about the works of these famous Stoics is how they have managed to break down Stoicism to practical advice and guidance for everyday people living everyday lives looking for wellbeing and happiness. There are four main values or ideas that take center stage in Stoicism. These ideas are:

- Value

The only one good thing is an excellent mental state which is rationalized by virtue and reason and this is the only thing that can guarantee a person's everlasting happiness. Money, success, fame and other material items can only bring us temporary happiness but make it hollow inside. There is nothing wrong with any of these-you need things like this to survive in this world and form a good life but excessive pursuit of these things will only lead to long-term damages. We will not feel a sense of fulfillment. The only thing that can give us fulfillment and happiness is a rational state of mental excellence.

- Emotions

Our judgments are the architects of our emotions. This judgement is how we think something is good or bad that is going to happen or already happening. Oftentimes, our mistaken judgments are the cause of negative emotions. However, as we know in Stoicism, the only things we can control are our own thoughts and actions. So, keeping this in mind, these judgments are within our control which means so is our negative emotions.

Stoicism, despite the popular opinion that it is an emotionless school of philosophy, is anything but emotionless. Stoicism principles are not repressive or denying anyone of their emotions. Stoicism instead views emotions as something entirely different. In following Stoic principles, you do need to overcome negative and harmful emotions that are a result of mistaken judgment and at the same time, embracing the positive emotions. For example, you replace anger with happiness.

- Control

A primary principle that Stoicism rallies are the things in the life of what we can control and what we cannot control. Our thoughts, feelings, emotions, desires, and actions are all things that are within our control. The external processes, other people's reactions, the results, consequences, objects are all outside our control. Our unhappiness, most of it at least is a result of confusing these two categories- thinking of the things that we have control but in reality, we do not. Thankfully, one thing that we happily do have control is the guarantee of a good, happy life.

The three popular Roman Stoics- Marcus Aurelius, Seneca and Epictetus offers a wide range of advice that is practical even for modern society. These writings were written with the sole purpose of helping people in their everyday lives.

Seneca in the later years of his life, living quietly in his country estates, wrote two of his most famous books, the *Naturales quaestiones*—an encyclopedia of the natural world; and his *Letters to Lucilius* which details his philosophical ideas and thoughts.

Marcus Aurelius was also known as the philosopher king, until his death. He wrote the book *Meditations* as his own journal for self-improvement and guidance.

Epictetus, born a slave but eventually rose to become a great Greek

Stoic philosopher. His teachings and philosophy were written down and published by his pupil in books known as Discourses and Enchiridion.

Stoicism and happiness

Stoicism, meaning the principles and beliefs that life should be focused on self-enlightenment, fulfillment, betterment, and happiness via strong yet simple values, and morals, has been around for centuries. Its conception, in ancient times, came at a time when life was simpler, with fewer distractions. Transformations and diversification throughout consistent evolution are inevitably inspired by mankind as a whole. Our desire to learn more, build more, make things bigger and better, and to be as educated, knowledgeable, and forward-thinking as possible has changed life and the way it is lived in ways that were inconceivable to humankind in the days when the Stoic way of life began. The development of transportation, mass production, political diversities, and modern technology has inspired and necessitated adaptations to the initial paradigms associated with Stoic-based principles.

There are plenty of people who hear about Stoicism and assume that this means that you will never feel the emotion in your life. They assume that no matter what situation comes at them, they will need to remain without emotion and just not respond to it at all. That is definitely not what this is all about. It is fine to feel emotions. It is just fine to feel sad when something goes wrong, or happy when there is a joyous occasion.

The difference here is that you get to decide when the emotions get to come out. For most people, when a situation occurs, they allow that situation to dictate what kind of emotion they are going to be feeling at the time. They do not really think about how that situation affected them, and often they do not think about whether that emotion makes any logical sense or not. They just react.

With Stoicism, you get to decide. You get to take a step back from the situation that is going on around you and decide whether you are using the right emotion or not. If the situation is first making you feel angry, you can step back and decide if this is really something that is worth your time to be angry about or not. If not, you will quell the emotion and decide to take a different course of

action, rather than letting that emotion take over. The emotion of anger, in particular, this can be so important because many people react in a rash and irrational way whenever they feel angry.

But this can be used in the opposite way as well. Say that you are in a joyous occasion, such as a good friend getting married or having a baby. You can use Stoicism to step back from the situation and see that yes, this is a happy occasion and it is just fine for you to be happy in this situation and to celebrate with the couple and others around you. In fact, it is likely that you are going to feel more happiness on this occasion because you decided that it was fine to be happy, rather than letting the situation at hand decide for you.

In both of these situations, you are going to be the one who gets to decide whether or not the situation will make you happy or sad or angry or something else. And in the long run, this is going to make you happier than ever. You are more than welcome to still feel all of the emotions when it comes to Stoicism, but you will also experience a sense of freedom because you are the one who gets to decide what emotion to use and when they get to come out.

While a lot of the ideas that came with Stoicism started during the time of ancient Greece, there are a ton of people who value these thoughts and are still using them in our modern times, and you can do the same thing. This is a good school of thought to follow whenever you would like to learn how to let go of things that are out of your control and when you would like to be able to find some more inner happiness. Let's take a look at some more of the basics that you need to know to put this school of thought to work for you.

Stoicism & Happiness

In practice, we need to start being positive while we learn to be neutral, because negativity will suck the life out of you. Stoics aren't disconnected and unhappy. Do not allow our lack of reaction and emotional outbursts misguide your truth about us. We seem that way only because we measure our situation and react accordingly. We inadvertently see the righteousness in all things and so we have no unhappiness to contend with.

Negative Thoughts

I have met a large number of people in my life. All of them are really good people. Some are blessed with the natural ability to

think positively. Some are blessed with the ability to be pragmatic, while a few have to battle the demons of negative thoughts on a daily basis.

In my own experience, I have not had a lot of negative thoughts □ only a few □ and I have never been one to really carry them on, or pursue them. I have always found them to be inaccurate and ultimately a waste of two precious resources □ time, and space in my conscious mind.

I suppose one of the reasons that negative thoughts and I don't really mix is because I choose to keep my mind engaged in the things that will advance me, and in the things that make me feel good. So, as you can see, it was a natural mistake at first when I thought that people with negative thoughts must feel horrible all day. Well, they do and they don't.

Negative thoughts exist and persist in the mind of people who have found safe haven in those thoughts. At some deeper level, negative thoughts make excuses of all kinds and jive with the inherent nature of the person. They give you reason to not trust others, and reason to not succeed and yet find it ok. They even give you reason to be abusive. As you can tell, negative thoughts give you permission to be free in a dark sort of way. Once you fall into the trap of being negative, you find a treasure trove of excuses, prejudices, and fears in the outside world □ and only the cradle of negativity seems to keep you safe. When you keep the body safe, it rewards you with pleasure. But this is pleasure based on an illusion.

The pleasure that you get from it gives you a plausible reason to not venture out and do what needs to be done to succeed. Most people with negative thoughts are not consistently successful. They may succeed at this or that, here and there, especially in tasks that require a certain kind of energy and a certain amount of bravado. But other than that, they will always find it difficult to advance their success beyond this basket of deplorable feelings.

How A Stoic Leads His Life

The way to vanquish negative thoughts is not to attack them at all. You can never participate in negative thoughts. You must not disagree with them, just as you must not agree with them. As far as negative thoughts are concerned, you have to completely disregard

them. You should never even entertain them.

If you are the kind that is generally positive but you battle with negative thoughts occasionally, then the fix is simple. Imagine you are standing at the side of a freeway, where traffic is heavy but moving fast. Would you walk up and stand in front of any of those speeding vehicles? No, that would be catastrophic for you. Would you stand at the side of the road, and lock your sights on them and pivot around as they pass you, then snap back and catch another vehicle and whip around as that one goes past? No. You will be in pain before long with all the snapping and whipping of your neck. Instead, the best way is to let each speeding vehicle just speed past. You don't have the power to engage them, and you don't have the resources to bring them to a halt. So your best bet is to let them go on their way. Pretty soon, the volume of traffic will die down and you can be on your way.

But if you are the kind that finds pleasure in delving into the negative, then you will always be attracted to those negative thoughts. Not only will you watch them constantly, you will attempt to jump in front of them and wrestle with them. This picture never ends very well, because at that point those negative thoughts become your beliefs, and those beliefs influence your actions. Pretty soon, otherwise innocuous thoughts turn to destructive actions.

Counter a negative thought, especially if you are the second kind of thinker, is to be able to engage in mindfulness and discipline every time you feel one coming on. If you find yourself seeking the shelter of a negative thought, then you need to be able to begin a breathing exercise that shifts your focus from it and onto your own breathing pattern. For those of you who have frequently recurring negative thoughts, you have to discipline yourself to trigger a kind of reaction where you begin to turn to this breathing exercise as soon as you feel a negative thought coming on. This takes discipline.

To be able to do all this, you need to also come to the realization that for the long while you've been dealing with negative thoughts, things have not been as good as they could have been. If you look deep in your heart, you will know this to be true. The way out is not to look at more negativity, but to turn to positivity and believe that your life is more than just a series of defensive negative maneuvers. If you find that your support system is populated with

people who are negative, it's time you extricated yourself from this group, and if you have to be alone, so be it. But better yet, get new friends. Leave the negative thoughts and influences behind.

This world is not made up of individual, seemingly bad encounters. It is made up with good in its entirety. You're just focusing on the bad, and your negativity and negative thoughts magnify it. Once you discipline yourself to look away, you will find that you can dictate whether the things that happen to you are positive or negative.

You need to embrace the power of belief and internalize the matrix of belief to experience a rebirth from the negative thoughts you have. A friend suffered from these negative thoughts since the time he was a teenager. What brought them to the surface, I do not know. But by the time he was in his thirties, they dictated his thoughts, behavior and station in life □ which was very poor indeed. When he was thirty-eight, he started meditating to relieve the stresses that were mounting from the negative thoughts, and slowly, over the course of three years, his path altered. Without any medication or professional psychological help, he managed to turn things around. If you ask him what his secret was, as I have, his answer is simple. It's just that he started to believe in himself.

Have you ever looked back at your week in reflection and felt this overwhelming sense of happiness just wash over you? Is that what you would call true happiness? Maybe it could be approximated or even be a good substitute. However, real happiness is not the gyration of emotions or the flailing of feeling. True happiness is grounded in peace. There is a path to it, and the Stoics knew that a long time ago. If you look at the things these men wrote in their own books about various subjects, you will start to observe a pattern of thinking that formed the foundation of many of the great accomplishments of the world. Take for instance the Greeks and their focus on knowledge and culture. Look at how Alexander the Great conquered the world, not because he wanted adulation from peasants, but because he wanted to elevate minds with Greek thinking □ Stoic values. But the result was that he became one of the richest men in the world across a thousand years.

Finding Peace

If you can touch true happiness, you can begin to experience peace.

There are many kinds of peace that seem to have floated in philosophy and religion over the years. All of them seem to get one dimension of the multidimensional concept. Peace is defined in many ways, not merely the lack of conflict □ although it seems so these days. The real peace that is referred to here is about the harmony in one's own heart. From that harmony, peace amongst men and across beliefs and nations can grow. Without the internal harmony within one's own soul, it is impossible to find the peace that is so highly coveted. There is a lot of literature on calmness and much has also been written about peace. It is easy to confuse or conflate the two, but we will unveil the benefits of one over the other throughout the course of this book by looking at the nature of calm and the state of peace which we get to know.

Chapter 8. Dealing with Negative Emotions

A premortem is when a person considers everything that could potentially go wrong within a plan before the plan is put into effect. The main reason that these are effective to put in place is that they mitigate the chance of preventable mistakes occurring. All too often, things fall apart due to causes that could have easily been prevented had anyone thought to check on them beforehand. This is where just a little bit of pessimism can go a long way, preventing us from making mistakes that would have proved detrimental.

Keeping human fallibility in mind is a largely freeing thing to do. Doing so reminds us that all things are bound to fall apart at one point or another, and on their own accord, if not by human mistake. This line of reasoning may seem counterintuitive, going into situations with only the potential bad outcomes in mind, but excessive optimism tends to be even more damaging in the long run than healthy pessimism.

A backup plan is something that is never deemed necessary by those who do not have bad outcomes in mind. If there is nothing to fear on the horizon, then there is no preparation made necessary where the player is currently. In this way, all too many people fall into traps and make mistakes that would have otherwise been avoided. Without planning ahead and giving ourselves a safety net that may help us with future failings, we are bound to hit the ground hard, and building ourselves back up is always bound to be a much more difficult process afterward than it could have been otherwise. Precaution and planning are two exercises that most people never do genuinely practice, but those who do are always prepared all the better for doing so.

It is always when we are propping ourselves up with the more self-aggrandizing behaviors that we run into our biggest and often most preventable mistakes. Relishing the brightness of our own busts we blind ourselves to any pitfalls we may have, our naive optimism transfixing a view of broken ladders into an impenetrable castle. As Mike Tyson once said, reflecting on the loss of his fortune and his fame, “if you are not humble, life will visit humbleness upon you.”

Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius all called this practice of premortem making the “premeditation of evils”. Seneca would

choose a specific plan that he had in mind and then would go over everything that could possibly go wrong and anything that could get in the way of achieving the goal.

This practice is, of course, always to be used with a fair amount of discretion, one proportionate to the discretion given to the potential issue(s) at hand. This preemptively searching out for any disadvantageous happenings should be done with precaution. We cannot afford to jump to conclusions here, but we are also obligated to make ourselves keenly aware of the dangers that we face.

Seneca also asserts that nothing happens to wise people that they do not expect to happen. This is not to say that things turn out, in the same way, the wise plan them to turn out, but instead they follow the path of what the wise reckon will happen. Wise people are also keenly aware of the fact that things are going to get in the ways of their plans. People with any planning abilities are easily able to see that wrenches are always going to be thrown into their operations. To deny this is to divorce oneself from reality. While it is rarely true that things do in fact turn out the ways in which wise people expect them to, those who take out premortems on plans are always better prepared when things go wrong.

Seneca, in this way, is always prepared for disruptions and his plans take these churnings into account. This makes his mode of thinking much more dynamic than many are because most are much too afraid of chaos to account for things going wrong beforehand, leaving them unprepared when things collapse and their belief systems ultimately turn over on their heads as a result.

In this Stoic way, Seneca became prepared effortlessly for either defeat or victory and accepted either as it would come to him. People who take this mindset are all the more delighted by pleasant surprises and far less distraught by the unpleasant. When we take negative things into account beforehand, the bar is set low initially and we therefore do not expect much of anything good to happen. This releases us from expectation and want and we become better prepared to deal with life's bereavement. When, of the other hand, we are expecting only good things to happen, we are invariably met with tragedy and disappointment, both of which could have been lessened greatly had we kept our expectations as low as possible.

Often times, we are met with issues that simply could not have been

avoided. These are the external realities that the Stoics refer to when speaking on things that we cannot change. Here, virtually the only two things that can help us are expectation management and acceptance of losses. These are two things that most of us fail to do, and are made much worse off and much more distressed by the things that are out of our control as a result.

Whether we accept it or not, our world is ruled by external factors. No matter what we do, it is always the world at large that can overpower us. Going against the grain of the world will only add to our suffering in the long run, though this is not to say that we are obligated to blindly follow the will of the crowd.

We do not always get the things that are rightfully ours, no matter how hard we try at times. A sense of entitlement, even concerning the things that we earn, is always bound hand and hand with one of disappointment and despair. It is not always relevant whether or not we have earned something. There are lots of times in which we will simply not be treated to that which we worked. Not everything that we deal with is bound to be clean and straightforward, in fact, most of the situations that we face are going to involve a complexity richer than any system that our imaginations can render. This is why we have an obligation to ourselves to prepare ourselves for the multiplicity of issues that we may be met with before they present themselves.

We cannot let the cloud of smoke that veils our circumstances deceive us. It is only once this cloud has been looked past that we can see the glowing red lava of chaos in the volcano below. Being aware of this chaos is freeing, but this awareness brings with it a complexity that eventually kills us. It is also this chaos that acquaints us with order. Without one, we are never able to see the other and are never made any wiser as a result.

In order to better move forward after losses, we need to curtail our shock and amazement at the unexpected things that happen to us. When keeping this equanimity in mind, we are much less miserable when things fall apart and much better able to bounce back and recover, moving on with greater ease and speed to further tasks and assignments.

The age-old adage “the only guarantee is that there are no guarantees” applies to the situations that we get ourselves into,

each and every one. We can never be sure what is going to happen to our plans, but we can avoid being drowned by looking ahead at whatever might come about. The only variable that we have complete control over in life is ourselves. If we do not control this variable, then we are bound to remain slaves to our own whims and to subsequently be tossed around wildly by whatever comes our way.

It is always better to err on the side of pessimism than to be blindsided by factors that we did not see coming. While unhealthy pessimism may spread throughout the whole of one's life, making everything seem so much more dire and negative than it really is, healthy pessimism is incredibly freeing in that it keeps us grounded regarding the negative happenings that are bound to come to us.

If there is one thing that is true about adversity, it is the fact that it serves to motivate much more than gifts do. When we are at the peaks of life, we are naturally not so motivated to get ahead because we are already where we want to be. If we were to stay within one of these walled gardens with no adversity and no darkness to disturb our souls (which do not exist in nature), then we would plateau in our development as people and never reach our true potential as a result. Our lives are naturally ambivalent in their happenings. There will always be changes that will transform our value structures and turn all that we know on its head. Without these transformations, we would simply stay the same throughout life, which is almost worse than getting progressively worse and worse.

It is when we are racing to recover the things that we have lost that we tend to make the most progress, naturally. Throughout these hectic periods in our lives, we find some of the greatest things that our intellects have to offer and become much richer for the future as a result. We gain the tools and experience some of the greatest experiences throughout these periods of time, though we are often so caught up in getting ahead that we are remiss to appreciate what it is that we are finding.

Anticipation is just one step in curtailing losses in life. It is what we do after anticipating hardships that truly make or break our experiences though. Once we can see trouble on the horizon, we have to take necessary precautions in order to lessen the damage that we are bound to incur. There are many instances when we

cannot expect to mitigate losses very effectively, even when employing our greatest precautionary measures, so here is where we need to learn how to move on from disadvantageous situations.

There is a natural tendency to speed up the pace of life when we are in trouble. This often causes us to think and act irrationally, jumping to conclusions about what it is that is happening, what it is that we should do about it, where the trajectory of the action is headed, and what can be gained out of the experience. Here we are dividing our world up into things that are helping us get over the hump, things that are neutral, and things that are not, which is another way in which our thinking becomes unclear and unsound throughout these times. There is here a lot to be said about the efficiency of response, but there remains even more to be said on the subjects of long term planning and keeping cool under pressure. When we feel this urge to make haste when under pressure, we should take this uncontrolled energy and funnel it, transforming this gaseous borg of anxiety into a fine, concise point of steady action, disciplined and effective.

We simply cannot afford to be too distraught when things fall apart. It is only when systems collapse that the chimeras holding them up are finally killed off. There are many floods that we experience in life, and they can easily overwhelm us and take us under, so the anticipation of the smaller collapses is necessary for the way of preventing the larger ones. It is only with this anticipation that we can avoid a complete catastrophe from taking our lives.

This Stoic conceptualization of the premeditation of evils seems at first glance to be at odds with the other Stoic principle of acceptance of fate. We can remain cognizant of all of the things that might go wrong in the future and still accept these things. Even working against the onslaught of negative events has to entail some acceptance of these events, as there are only so many things that we do to change the passage of adversity.

There is something of a passive culture surrounding positive psychology. It greatly encourages acceptance of social ills such as inequality and authoritarianism. While we should always try to see the silver linings in all situations, we cannot afford to fool ourselves into thinking that everything is going to be ok in the long run, and we cannot simply run away from the problems that we are faced with as time goes on. Positivity survives off of plenty, but it is

negativity, in part, that allows us to generate all that its counterpart requires. Without negative emotion and circumstance, there remains nothing guiding us, nothing chasing us from the end of the tunnel towards better things.

This movement in psychology also encourages that we never change things and that we simply conform to the general will without ever questioning what it is that is going on around us. This line of thinking that implies that everything is just fine the way that it is and that there is no need to question any of the happenings surrounding us is one fit for an adolescent mind, one that is not yet familiar with life's greater hardships and one that is afraid to grow up. This attitude leads to disillusionment and sorrow, more so than would otherwise be found had we employed more realistic modes of thought.

The negativity that is inevitably found within any rational thinking is not in line with capitalist mythology. To assert that things simply do not always go our way does not sell anything, and so becomes a point that has to be passed from one to another privately. No one likes to hear limiting facts. No one wants any part in accepting factual information asserting to them that they are not in control of everything. While it may seem more pleasing to us not to accept this truth, it will come up to bite us even harder than it would otherwise if we are resistant to it. No matter where we hide, there is no getting away from the fact that we do not control everything.

Negative visualization is the stoic inversion of the commonly used new age shibboleth "the power of positive thinking". Stoicism was born into a time and place in which human life was short and brutish. In order to give their followers a better perspective on the lives that they led, the Stoics needed to make it clear to them that their situations could always be made much worse. This is a line of thinking useful to anyone experiencing adversity. If we are focusing on those who have more than us throughout times of chaos and distress, then we will feel all the worse by contrast. In this way, sometimes looking into the abyss below can make us better see the glittering gold in front of us.

Life and all of its happenings are transitory. None of us are quite as significant as we think we are, so we will always do well to stop taking ourselves so seriously and to find the good in life while being prepared for the bad. One thing that most people do not take into

account enough is the fact that things seldom go as poorly as we anticipate they will. We are usually much more gifted than we can see from the inside. We cannot afford to be pedantic either. When life throws us oranges, we have no right to criticize the supremes, but can only rejoice in the citrus that we have been gifted.

One of the most destructive emotions that we feel throughout life is that of jealousy. The notion that other people somehow have objectively better lives than we do is a very distressing one, but is rarely rational and almost never grounded in reality. Everyone experiences extremely difficult things in life and those who are not suffering at the moment are bound to in the future. People rise and fall all the time, so we can always bet that even the most fortunate among us deal with very difficult obstacles. We tend toward magical thinking when jealous of others, modes of thought that never work out in our own favor and often lead us to irrational conclusions such as “he (or she) is just blessed and I am cursed”, or “it doesn’t matter what I do, I can just never beat them”. These need to be curtailed with practice, because minds that are clouded with such perceptions typically start to scheme and to connive, making all those who know them worse off as a result.

Mindfulness is a great way to mitigate negative traits such as jealousy. In putting ourselves in the moment and focusing only on what we have in front of us, we start to see what we have more clearly. By giving ourselves time to slow down, we can see better what it is that other people have, how we can benefit from their fortunes, and what it is that we can do to strive towards better things for ourselves. We only get so much time on this earth, and there is ultimately only so much that we can do about the adversity that we face, so we cannot waste time stuck in negative and needlessly limiting thinking patterns. All that we can do is stay realistic about the problems to come and be grateful for all of the things that we have at present.

Chapter 9. Productivity Avalanche

I find it very interesting that the same people sometimes are very lazy and can perform little work and sometimes are very productive and can perform an enormous amount of work within the same period of time. This happens because how much work you do in a day, a month or a year depends on whether you have activated a Productivity Avalanche. When you begin working on any goal you experience significant resistance, later you get into a working mode, still later you get so much into a working mode that you don't want to stop, and eventually you are so motivated to work that you can perform the amount of work that impresses both you and other people. When we are unproductive, we struggle to even get past the resistance stage, when you are moderately productive you fall off somewhere in the middle of this cycle and when you are extremely productive you activate all stages of the Productivity Avalanche.

Law of Inertia

During the winter when I was 12, I missed 2 weeks of ballroom dance classes due to illness. After I recovered and was supposed to go to the upcoming dance class, I realized that it was rather difficult to do. I thought, "I am a bit lazy today. I just don't feel like turning off the TV and going outside the cozy apartment. I will miss just one more class." In a few days, just 15 minutes before I had to go to the dance school, I realized, "I am still lazy and don't want to go outside. If it requires so much effort to just leave the apartment today, how much effort it will require me to attend the dance school regularly?"

That day, I finally summoned up my willpower and forced myself to get out of the apartment. After the class I realized, "Wow! I enjoyed all 1.5 hours of the class. I learned 3 new movements and I feel very energetic. How awesome it is that I finally went to the class. I love dancing!" After that day I attended the dance school regularly again, it didn't take me any effort or willpower to get out of the apartment and I never missed a class before the summer break. After the summer break, just before going to the first dance class of the school year in September, I realized that it was rather difficult to do. I thought, "I am a bit lazy today. If I miss just one class, it probably won't be a big deal." I learned that if I attend dance

classes regularly it's easy and enjoyable to continue attending them, but if I miss several classes in a row it requires a huge effort to begin attending them again.

In physics Newton's First Law (or the Law of Inertia) says: "An object in rest stays in rest and an object in motion will continue staying in motion unless acted upon by an external force." Although this law was first formulated in physics it is extremely relevant for productivity as well. The saying "A job begun is a job half done" is true, because it takes significantly more energy to begin working on a task than to continue working on it when you have already begun. The reason why the majority of people procrastinate and don't even begin working on a task is because they sense a mental barrier which they find difficult to overcome. The ability to overcome inertia consistently is one of the most important qualities of highly productive people. You might ask: How can I overcome inertia for working on a task that may seem boring or unpleasant? Well, there are three effective things that you can do.

First, you need to realize that postponing the task will cause you only harm. When you procrastinate you keep a task in your memory which reduces the amount of attention that you devote to other things you do. When you eventually get to the task it won't be any less boring or unpleasant than it is now, and you will spend exactly the same energy and time to complete it as if you began now. It may be much more beneficial to begin working on an action item as soon as it gets to your to-do list because fear of doing a task may take more time and energy than the task itself. Remember that always is a present moment, and If you feel resistance to doing the task right now, you are likely to feel the same resistance tomorrow and in a week, so it's better to start working on a task right now to free your mind for other activities and to enjoy benefits of completion longer.

You also need to understand a correct relationship between motivation and behavior. You might think that you need to feel motivation and enthusiasm before you can begin working on a task, however it works vice versa, when you begin working on a task your motivation and enthusiasm grow. Your goal should be just to take the first step and it will give you a significant impetus to get into a state of flow and accomplish the task without significant further effort. So just ignore how you feel about doing the task and

get started anyway, you will feel significantly better afterwards.

My father always said: “I think that the most important quality of a successful person is an extremely short distance between the time an idea comes to your head and the time you begin to implement it.” It impressed me always since childhood how he can act so quickly; when he decides that something needs to be done he does it in a moment. To me he always looked like a productivity machine. Make a game out of it, something comes to your mind, snap your fingers, you are already doing it, somebody asks you to do something and you consider it important, snap your fingers, you are already doing it, an interesting idea comes to your mind, snap your fingers, you are already doing it. You need to begin working on a task before your negative thoughts and internal fears make this task significantly more complex in your mind than it actually is.

I first met my wife, to whom I have been happily married for many years, in a shopping mall in Kiev. What’s unusual about our meeting was that I met her while I was going through a dating training. The first thing that they taught us during the training was the rule of 3 seconds which says if you notice a girl that you really like, you need to begin walking towards her within 3 seconds of deciding that you like her. Why just 3 seconds? Because after 3 seconds different negative thoughts begin to come to your mind like: “What if she has a boyfriend? How painful will it be if she doesn’t like me? How it will hit my self-esteem if she is rude to me?” Once these thoughts come to your mind it becomes a dozen times more difficult to overcome your mental barrier and approach a girl that you like. I wouldn’t say if this training was good or bad, however I learned that this rule of 3 seconds works like a charm in dating. In the same way, shortening the distance between an idea and action works extremely well in all other areas of your life. You need to act as quickly as possible to avoid significant difficulties that your mind will create if you wait too long. If you wait too long your subconscious will quickly find reasons why it’s a good idea to delay working on a task, it will paralyze you and will make accomplishing what you planned much more difficult and stressful.

The trick in overcoming inertia is to make an effort to start working on a task so miniscule that it would be stupid not to take the first step. Explain to yourself: “My goal is not to accomplish the task but to just get started. After working on a task for 5 minutes, if I decide

to – I can stop working on it. If I am up to it, I can stop – and it's completely OK." When you tell yourself, you will not complete the entire task but only do something in its direction for 5 minutes, you will leave your internal instant gratification monkey, which is responsible for procrastination, with no arguments. All your procrastination stops when you just get started. In few minutes you will get in a state of flow, will experience positive emotions from doing what you are supposed to be doing and will not want to stop until the task is completed.

When you overcome inertia and just get started, it's already 50% of success because now instead of swimming against the current, you will swim along with the current. It will not only be easier for you to do your work, but it will require significant effort to not finish what you have begun, as you will learn in the next section. For now, just remember that a job begun is a job half done, so if you want to become insanely productive you need to develop a habit of reducing the time between idea and action to a minimum. A good idea came to your mind? Snap, you are already working on it. Give your internal instant gratification monkey no chance to seduce you with emails, videos or social networks or perfectly reasonable arguments why it's not so bad to postpone working on a task that will have a significant positive impact on your destiny or the destiny of organization in which you work.

Do not wait; the time will never be "just right." Start where you stand, and work with whatever tools you may have at your command, and better tools will be found as you go along. – Napoleon Hill

Eat a live frog first thing in the morning and nothing worse will happen to you the rest of the day. – Mark Twain

No matter how big and tough a problem may be, get rid of confusion by taking one little step toward solution. – George F. Nordenholt

Motivation snowball

In 1982 Kenneth McGraw and colleagues at the University of Mississippi conducted an experiment in which participants had to solve a tricky puzzle. Before the participants could solve the puzzle, they were told that the study was over. Despite this, almost 90% of the people continued working on the puzzle anyway.

When people have begun working on a task, they feel discomfort if they don't finish it, so if they get interrupted, they feel an urge to return to working on it as soon as possible. This effect is called the Zeigarnik effect after Russian psychologist Bluma Zeigarnik who first described it in 1927. The producers of soap operas use cliffhangers at the end of each episode to make you ask "What will happen next?" and feel discomfort if you don't watch the next episode. So, when you realize that you have spent the entire day watching dozens of episodes of "Lost," know that it's all because the Zeigarnik effect creates a burning desire to finish what you have started and not because you are lazy. After you have overcome an initial inertia and begun working on a task, the Zeigarnik effect comes into the game and you feel compelled to continue until the task is finished. When you work on your next project you can use this knowledge to your advantage and take the first step towards your goal as soon as possible, because after you have got your productivity train in motion the Zeigarnik effect will make sure it doesn't stop until you finish what you have started.

When you successfully accomplish a task, you will feel a burst of happiness and self-confidence. This success not only feels great but will motivate you to begin working on the next task to repeat this positive experience, and this time overcoming inertia will be much easier. The more you accomplish the better you feel about yourself, the better you feel about yourself the more desire you have to accomplish even more. The more tasks you have recently successfully accomplished, the more addiction you have developed for a feeling of accomplishment, the more eager you become to accomplish even more. Success breeds success, so what you need to launch a productivity avalanche is to take action and plant a first success seed. Daily small successes are the best motivation to pursue the long-term goal and to work without procrastination.

Here is how the Productivity Avalanche concept works in your everyday life. At first, due to the Law of Inertia you feel resistance to begin working on a task. You might think: "A task is difficult to accomplish; I'd rather watch a funny video with cats on the Internet to feel instant gratification." On a logical level, however, you know that procrastination will make this task even more difficult to do, so it's beneficial to begin working on it as soon as possible. To trick your mind, you tell yourself: "I don't need to accomplish the entire

task, I just need to begin working on it and after 5 minutes, if I decide to – I can stop working on it.” After you have begun working on a task, in few minutes you get into a state of flow and staying in this state is much easier than getting into it. Due to the Zeigarnik effect, you don’t want to stop until the task is finished because you know that if you stop in the middle you will feel discomfort and if you finish you will experience a burst of happiness. When you finally accomplish a task, your self-esteem grows and you experience positive emotions. These positive emotions make you want to start the next task as soon as possible and overcoming inertia is significantly easier now than the first time. And the process repeats. You accomplish more and more tasks, and the more you succeed, the more your total of finished tasks grows like a snowball. At this point you realize that you activated a Productivity Avalanche and how powerful it is.

The difference between people who do an enormous amount of work per day and no work at all is very insignificant in terms of effort applied. Unproductive people struggle to cross the initial inertia barrier. Productive people activate a Productivity Avalanche and enjoy the benefits of going full speed towards their long-term goals. Activating a Productivity Avalanche is simple. You just need to begin working on a task as soon as possible and create your initial seed of success. To activate a Productivity Avalanche consistently, you need to develop a habit of making the time gap between when an idea comes to your head and when you begin implementing it shorter, shorter and shorter.

Chapter 10. Getting Organized

When one is considered organized, it simply means they are systematic and orderly in the way they approach and do things. Organization involves planning, managing your time properly, and sticking to your plan.

Most of us will jot down a list of items to buy before we walk into a supermarket, or even if not, we are likely to do a mental inventory of our supplies before making purchases. You select a day within the week to do your laundry as well as your housekeeping to ensure that your place is tidy. At the office, we gather in boardrooms at specific times to discuss and come up with strategies to move our business forward.

Before you take a trip to Paris or a safari in Kenya, you inquire about the costs, make bookings, and set a travel date. Before you send your daughter or son to school, you make inquiries about a series of things before settling for a particular institution; of course, the place will be one that you feel provides the best academic education for your child, but also a place where your child will benefit from overall growth and development. When you are due for a job interview, you try and get to the place before the designated time, and by then, you should have already done a bit of research about the organization and of course, familiarized yourself with the position.

These instances are all elements of organizing; to plan in advance for an activity or event so that when you begin your tasks, it is easy, clear, and successful.

So, why should you be organized? Experience and research have shown that people who are organized are generally more successful at what they do, accomplish more than those who are not, tend to have more 'free' time, and lead overall happier lives. When you make a plan and stick to it, you are able to manage your life effectively and lead a fulfilling and happy life. By being organized, your time is well-managed, and your activities are planned and predictable, which makes them easier, so you will always do things to completion, and your reward will be a happier, more satisfying life.

Therefore, if you are one who is not organized and always finds himself in a mess when handling things, you need to start planning and bring order to your life. Most times, constraints and lateness or even failing to know something you should be linked directly to deficiency or lack of organization.

Next, let's look at the question of time and its management and why it is key to being organized.

Time Management

Time management involves the prudent use of time by knowing how you are spending it, organizing your time and activities, and committing to what you have planned your time for. It helps to do things IN time if you want to avoid the headache of last-minute pursuits.

It is applicable in all aspects of our lives - professional, personal, and social, so it should be a habit that is embraced and treated dearly. When we manage our time well, we tend to succeed in whatever we are doing, and we lead a happier life with minimal stress.

Managing your time involves looking at the commitments in your life and deciding which is more important than the other, and then arranging, prioritizing, or replacing these commitments so that the most important is at the top of your to-do list.

Also, time management is about simplifying your life by making it easy to get things done. The more non-important commitments you put aside, the more time you will have to devote to more important things. Designating a time for everything you want to do makes things a lot easier.

Most of us are familiar with the cliché wise terms about time, "Time is money," "Time lost shall never be recovered," etc. Time is the single most important commodity in our lives; if you use it wisely, you will cherish and enjoy your time on earth, but if you waste it, you will end up with regrets. Plan your time to the millisecond and use your time prudently.

Develop a habit of planning, using, and sticking to your program to understand the benefits of time management. It is the first and major step towards realizing your dream of leading an organized life and being successful in whatever you pursue. Once you have

perfected the art of time management and made it part of your life, the next thing is to know when to say NO!

Time is such a tricky thing. Sometimes, we have so much of it (though often these seem to be negative times), and other times, we just can't get enough. Managing it—well, that's always been fiddly. Thankfully we've got a few Mindset Hacks that may do just the trick.

We've gathered together some time-saving tips that will help you manage your time like a pro. Many of them are, like the best advice, simple things we've seen others do and are just efficient ways to use a few handy tools that you may already in your environment to maximize your time-usage. Here is a handy list of tips and tricks that we've compiled for you:

- Time journal - Think of this as the 'audit phase' portion of improving your time-management skills. Keep track of how you are spending your hours via apps or a good old-fashioned paper planner. While the paper doesn't have all the bells and whistles that you might like, it comes already organized for documenting skills. This means you don't have to spend time learning a new app if you just want to get started with logging where your time goes.
- Choose commitments wisely - This is actually quite important. If you are always selecting very time-sensitive tasks that you find overly debilitating, this can affect your overall productivity. Try to opt for work-tasks that don't drain you as much whenever possible. Don't skip over the difficult ones completely, of course, as generally, these complicated tasks are how we learn to do more. That said, everyone has their own special skills, and there is nothing wrong with keeping them sharp by taking commitments that won't drain you daily.
- Keep emails brief - A personal favorite. This one can save you an immense amount of time. Keep your email responses lean and mean. Just the facts that the recipient needs, no more, and no less. Often you can find yourself writing tiny novels at work when it's easily avoided with a bit of practice. The next time you find yourself writing

an email with a length approaching the last Stephen King novel, then stop. Sit on it for a day and then open it again. Ask yourself, 'How can I say the same thing in 5 or 6 sentences?'. This trick also works when sending an emotional email at work (a huge no-no) by letting you step away to view the contents of the email the next morning. This lets you take out anything unnecessary, including useless information, speculation about the day, or emotions if you find it hard to work with another person in your company. When it comes to emails, save yourself a world of time by sticking to just the facts!

- **Typing practice** - Are you a hunt-and-peck typist? Downloading some typing-tutor software or utilizing any number of free typing resources online can be of immense help to you if you are working with a computer every day. The average typing speed for non-IT professionals is typically around 40 words per minute. By increasing your speed to IT-level typing (around 70-90 words per minute), you can reduce your time at the computer by half and put that time in other places as needed! Be sure to start training your new typing skills today!
- **Use alarms** - Your smartphone has some very simple alarm functions that you can utilize to schedule your tasks. That said, if you are using a computer at work and have Outlook, take the time to synchronize it with your smartphone. It makes scheduling tasks a BREEZE and will give you an alert 15 minutes before said task so that you can be ready (time is adjustable, and you can dismiss these alerts or 'snooze' them if you need to).
- **Templates** - These are excellent when writing novels, reports, and any number of other complex items that we need to wizard-up in the workplace. A template can save you time by allowing you to direct the necessary data at a much faster rate than you could collate on your own. As a bonus, the more that you use them, the less you may find that you rely on them, having filed away the mental order in your subconscious. If you don't have templates for reports and such already available at your

workplace, a quick Google search can net you a number of templates for just about anything. Take advantage of this and save yourself hours of outlining. It's worth it.

- Dictation - Are you not a huge fan of typing—be it due to arthritis, carpal tunnel, or even an old grudge with a typing teacher—you are not quite ready to let go of? Not a problem. Programs like Dragon: NaturallySpeaking can learn the particular cadences of your voice to make not only typing but system commands into a much more pleasant experience. This particular software has been around for years and as such, adapts to your voice with very little training at all. Best of all, the professional version comes with macros, a feature which lets you 'record' doing something a little more complex, say opening a particular folder and set of documents followed by starting up the music player for a particular playlist, which you can assign specific voice commands to. Macros actually record where you click your mouse and what actions you take, so it can be a very, very useful tool in your time-saving panoply. Remember to keep the music to instrumentals, of course, as the computer will be listening for your commands, but with a little setup program of this nature can greatly improve your productivity.
- Start EARLY at the same time each day - While you might not like this one at first, getting up and ensuring that you come to work early is a great habit to get yourself into. Tell yourself, "On-time is late," and start ensuring that you are always at work 20 minutes early so that you have time to relax for a cup of coffee, maybe read the daily news (important for the socialization factors at work), and to review your workload before leaping into the fray! Developing this habit now can really help improve overall productivity, as you won't feel rushed every morning but rather feel relaxed, refreshed, and ready-to-go!
- Utilize downtime - Are you having trouble loading internet pages? Are you waiting for an email from someone who is also working on the same project?

Utilize your downtime. There is always something that you can be doing. Choose another item from your task list that you can begin on. Outline the next steps for when you complete the stalled task. At the very least, you can review your current progress until you get the go-ahead to move forward. Be creative; you know that there is work that you can do and that it can make a huge difference when you are working on a deadline. Make use of that downtime now, and you'll have more free time later.

- Come in early - Every now and again, a great way to get ahead at work is a simple method. Come in early. You'll have fewer distractions in the office, more time to work, and a refreshed morning-mindset that will allow you to tackle the toughest of problems. Besides, no matter how blind we think they sometimes might be, your boss notices things like this. A minimal time investment now could mean a promotion or at the very least, fewer instances of having to work on the weekend—just something to consider.
- Don't immediately reply to emails - Email is a wonderful medium for quick communication; however, it can also be a maddening distraction. Try deciding times in advance when you will answer emails. Generally, we get a popup when an email comes in with the name and subject present. Take advantage of this by advising your boss and co-workers to put 'Urgent' in the subject line if the matter is something that must be dealt with immediately. This way, you know what can and cannot wait, and you can devote all of your focus to your work.
- Batch related tasks - If you have a number of tasks to do and many of them are similar or in the same category, then do them in category related batches. For instance, if you need to run 2 reports, contact 3 clients, and email 2 clients, it is a waste of time to run 1 report, email a client, etc. Do all the reports at once, do all the calls at once, same with the emails. The reasoning behind this is that there is a different mentality associated with various types of tasks. It is more efficient to do them in related

batches so that you don't have to switch mindsets constantly. Try doing your work in related batches and see just how much time you can truly save. You'll be happier for it.

- Energize - (caffeine or fruit sugars) - If you don't abuse it, caffeine and fruit sugars can be your friend. When you need to work quickly and with extra alertness, then be sure not to skip the coffee. Fruit sugars work as well, so if you are not a fan of coffee or tea, start your morning with some apple slices and honey. This can give you that extra 'go!' to help you tackle the most that you can during your workday (with the added bonus of tasty beverages or fruits!).
- Determine your optimal schedule - Everyone has time during the day or evening when they are working at their best. Do you know what times are for you? It might be worthwhile to take note of the times when it seems that you are getting the most done. Knowledge of this timeframe can help you, as you can assign yourself your most difficult tasks during these hours so that you can grind at them when you are at your most efficient. Give yourself a productivity/time audit and make the most of this technique!
- Telecommute when possible - Working from home saves money for your place of employment and also makes you more productive. There is a level of relaxation that comes from a home that is good for boosting confidence and performance, and you simply cannot reproduce it in the office. Plus, a time that you save commuting is a time that you can spend on yourself!
- Ditch that difficult task until after lunch - If you have been struggling all morning with a particular task, consider moving to another task and returning to the problematical one after lunch. Once you've eaten, you will feel more relaxed and energized, and the time that you spent separating your mind from the problematical task will ensure that you will return to it with a fresh perspective and attitude. If you can put it off until after lunch, then consider this approach. You'd be amazed at

what your mind can come up within a problem-solving scenario once you've given it a little slack.

- Big, obnoxious desk clock - Get yourself a large, perhaps even silly-large desk clock. Yes, we realize that you can check the time on your work computer or your phone, but this is a mental hack that we are suggesting here. Having a large clock in your view will make you acutely aware of the time at all times! This will help make sure that you realize how much time you are spending on particular items and make you mindful of upcoming items that require your attention later in the day. Give it a try, and you'll see. A little time awareness goes a long way!

Chapter 11. Increase Productivity

Personal Values

Because time management and life management are inseparable, improving your productivity starts with determining your values. Keep in mind that managing time properly is impossible if you don't know the things you value.

Excellent time management involves harmonizing a set of events that you consider as a top priority. If you think an activity is a low priority, you won't exert any effort to manage your time well in doing it.

Answer this simple question: "Why are you doing what you are doing?"

The Purpose and Meaning of Your Life

Everyone needs a purpose and meaning. People become sad and anxious if they feel that their activities are irrelevant to their values and beliefs. If you know the "why" behind your activities, you'll know the "when", "what", and "how" of improving your productivity.

Improving your time management skills is useless if you think that you are doing unimportant things. If you are good at doing things that are in contrast to what you value in life, you will just become more anxious and frustrated.

The Most Important Things in Your Life

After determining your life's purpose and meaning, you must identify the things you consider as extremely important. What are the things you would stand for regardless of the situation? What are the things you would never do?

Your day-to-day activities should match your own values. According to recent studies, poor time management results from the difference between a person's inner convictions and the things he/she needs to do.

Believe That You Are Special

Each person is unique in terms of values. No two people have the exact set of things they consider as important. Appraisals form an

essential part of your identity. They rarely change as you grow old. You must find your real values and manage your time so that you are working (and living) according to those values.

Perform Self-Analysis

The following questions will help you understand your values. Once you have determined those values, use them as the basis for preparing your schedule.

How would you describe yourself to a stranger?

“If an alien asks you to describe humans, what would you say?” – This question will help you understand your thoughts about humans in general. Do you consider humans as kind and loving creatures? Alternatively, you classify them as devious entities that cannot be trusted?

“How would you define life?” – With this question, you will discover your life philosophy.

“What is your ultimate goal?” – Your response to this question determines the goal that you should achieve for you to feel complete. This goal has the most significant influence on your entire life.

Some Apps for Productivity

Focus Booster

It works like a timer with more features, allowing you to manage your time in small bursts while avoiding potential distractions. The great thing about this app is that it records sessions and presents it in a detailed spreadsheet that allows you to analyze your time. Together with this, you can get suggestions on how to use your time better.

Rescue Time

Unfortunately, Rescue Time isn't free. On the plus side – it is an excellent app to have with more features to speak of. It is the perfect app for people who do most of their work online or through a computer, whether its PC, Linux, Mac, or Android. Rescue Time essentially tracks down your computer activity and presents you with a chart showing how much time was spent on websites.

Any-Do

A comprehensive app, “Any-Do” is ideal for people who often work

with others in a group. It is because of the main perk of “Any-Do” is to share the list with other people who are working on the same project.

Other than that, “Any-Do” carries the most essential features of a typical time management app. It includes shopping lists, “To-Do” lists, notes, reminders, and events. You can also sync the app with other devices.

Toggl

Toggl works mainly as a time tracker. What you do is turn it on and off whenever you’re doing a task and labels it for future use or reference. You can even organize time tags, and for those who get billed by the hour, you can use it to track billable time. It’s currently one of the apps being used by those who work remotely. Timesheets may be sent, exported, printed, and reviewed.

To Do Calendar Planners

Electronic calendars are so much more efficient, allowing you to create a task list and have yourself reminded before the crucial moment. It is precisely what the app can do, including synching of data, prioritizing tasks, and even attaching Google Maps to your tasks.

Remember the Milk

An app to remember, Remember the Milk lets you organize and manage your time through several devices. It works in computers and mobile phones and may connect with your Twitter, Google calendar, and Gmail. You can also separate task lists depending on priority or if they’re for home, work, or even school.

Time Doctor

Another one for the team, this app helps track your time, provides reminders, reporting tools, and integrates with other computer networks. It has the additional benefit of monitoring sessions through screenshots, therefore allowing you to find out whether your workers are working. Unfortunately, the app isn’t free.

Google Calendar

Something free from Google, this Calendar presents a task list with an estimated time of starting and getting them done. You can add or remove tasks as you go. You can put in new tasks, set appointments, and block time for certain activities. The great thing about Google Calendar is that it’s very pervasive so that you can put

it in your phone, your tablet, and your laptop. If you happen to lose your gadget, you can always obtain your account from Google so there nothing is nothing lost.

Todoist

Another time management app that works for both single users and group work, the Todoist lets you arrange tasks, set deadlines, and have yourself reminded of anything that needs to be completed. It helps you keep track of urgent projects and collaborate with other people in your team. It's available in several languages and can be synched through all your gadgets.

Focus @ Will

This app uses the power of music and neuroscience in boosting productivity. The app essentially provides a continuous release of music that is proven to help with brain activity. It is meant to be used for those cerebral activities like paperwork or when you're trying to write a paper. For menial tasks like cleaning the house: however, it won't be as effective. It's NOT available for free, so you have to consider that.

ATracker

This personal time tracker lets you find out everything you do the whole day through a comprehensive reporting. You can customize the options for the tracker, add more tasks, and check the ones that have already been finished.

If This Then That (IFTT)

Another unique time management product, it makes use of a basic logical precept wherein one action triggers you into doing another. It has the same principle used in the "Rhythm Routine". The app, however, uses the term 'recipe' and offers a host of preset and customizable recipes. For example, IF you're in the office, THEN you put your phone into silent mode. IF it's Friday, THEN you take your laundry to the cleaners. It also comes with a "To-Do" list that works with GPS and Maps. Hence, if you go to a certain spot and your "To-Do" list has something that is to be done there, it would alert you to that task.

How to Manage Your Work Environment

The term "work environment" here covers both your home and workplace – and any other place where you plan to do any activity.

It is an accepted fact that to work best, a conducive atmosphere is important. If you are not happy with your environment, it becomes challenging to focus on the task at hand – since you would be constantly distracted by various irritants.

It is, therefore, imperative that you create an atmosphere around you that promotes optimal output for you and all those who work with you. This covers your style of working, the equipment you use, the people you work with, and your motivation level.

Get Rid of Physical Clutter

Clutter is like a hidden monster, who gobbles up your energy. You will find that wherever there is clutter, productivity decreases considerably. You need to get rid of clutter from your environment as well as from your mind if you want to be able to do your best at any given time.

Here are a few top tips to ensure that your environment is clutter free and stays that way:

- Everything needs to have a place – this is one of the most critical rules whether you are an office or home (or traveling). Everything needs to have a place. On your desk create a flow order where papers come on the left and are sent onwards on the right. The table top should consist of only those items you need to work with during office hours. The rest go in drawers or any designated place.
- Extend the workplace vertically – lack of space is often the most common reason for desk-clutter. If you do not have enough space to put things away in their own place, think about expanding vertically. Different sized open cubicles on the wall behind or besides can instantly de-clutter your environment.
- Add hidden storage space – think of where you can insert a couple of drawers and do so. Your desk would become a versatile storage unit if raised a little and then equipped with partitions and/ or drawers. You can add a hidden cabinet in many places in the work station. Let your creativity flow – or call in an expert.
- Organize drawers – just having drawers is not

enough. Ensure that the drawers are designed to keep everything in place as well. Use partitions inside the drawer to ensure that you can reach anything you want even without looking. It's incredible how much your productivity can improve when you have all the things you need in their place.

- Clear the computer desktop either daily or weekly – if you are a person who saves everything on the desktop you will, in no time have a vast mass of files cluttering your desktop. Besides making it difficult to trace stuff, the clutter would also tire your mind. Make it a habit to send all data to their respective folders and clear the desktop – either by the end of business or at the end of the week.
- Filing of documents must be done immediately – in offices where the paper flow is high and, it is imperative that filing should be done the same day, every day. About 30 percent of work time is generally wasted looking for documents in an office. Do not allow this time to drain.
- Keep what you need around you – forget about the items that “I might need some time”. Keep only things, which you need around you. Send everything away that does not need to be used on a daily basis.

De-cluttering Your Mind

De-cluttering of the mind is as vital as de-cluttering of your work environment. How do you de-clutter your mind? Here are a few tips that will ensure that your mind stays free so you could totally focus and concentrate on the task you have on hand.

- Write it down – here your to-do list comes in handy. Write down everything you need to do each day. Complete your next day's to-do list before you retire for bed. In this way, you know what you have to do when you wake up in the morning.
- Use a planner – what needs to be done in a week, a month, and a year can be fixed and outlined in a yearly planner. Put the planner in a place where you

can see it clearly and daily.

- Use technology – don't send yourself mental notes and feel overwhelmed by the necessity to remember so many things or worrying about forgetting anything important. Use your smartphone to remind you about tasks, keep track of time spent, announce meetings and deadlines, and so on. In this, your mind will stay free to focus on the work and nothing else.
- Leave office things in the office – make it a point to shut off your mind to office matters the moment you step out of the office. The same applies to house issues; leave all your home worries at home and do not allow it to overlap with things you have to do in the office. It takes a little practice, but it is possible. Program your phone not to ring between 8 PM and 9 AM. Also, do not open office email once you are out of the office.
- Take time to de-stress your mind – you need mental relaxation to release the stress that builds during working hours, especially if your job involves a high-stress environment. Find out means to relax your mind, such as 5-10 minutes' meditation,

Staying Motivated

Staying motivated is one of the most significant challenges people face with work. Whether you refer to household chores or office work, finding the drive within you to get things done is often quite tricky. How do you do it? How do you manage to keep your motivation high so you could accomplish all that you set to do?

Reward a Good Job Done

One of the best motivators is a reward at the end of the task completed. Make a list of rewards you are eligible for at the end of each task on your to-do list. It could be a cup of coffee, a game on your smartphone, a 5-minute break on Facebook – whatever motivates you.

Take a Quick Break

Breaks are excellent boosters for productivity. Studies show that people who take a break at intervals of 90 to 120 minutes actually

are more focused and work better. Put an alarm for 90 minutes and take a break to do something relaxing – grab a healthy snack or a cup of coffee, play a game, do a 10-minute meditation session, listen to a song, etc. Aim to keep the break under 15 minutes to enjoy the best results.

Watch Out for Time Killers

Perhaps one of the most significant challenges you will have to conquer is how to deal with time killers. The first thing to do is to identify which are the tasks that kill your time most. Once you have the list, you work out a plan to minimize the damage. Here are the top 7 most common time killers:

Checking Emails

Unless strictly necessary otherwise, turn off the email notification function on your smartphone and allow a specific time to read-and-answer email every day. It could be early morning, around noon, or at the end of the day. Have an automatic announcement that gives the sender a heads-up about the time you usually check your email.

Watching TV

Watching TV is relaxing for most people, but if you end up watching something beautiful on every channel available, you will have precious little time left for doing anything else. Please make a list of the programs you want to see and check the time it takes to do so. If you are comfortable with the time you spend watching TV, it is okay; but if you find that TV takes away too much from your productive time, work out a better schedule. Also, stick to it.

Commuting

Commuting is one of the biggest time gobblers, but there is little you can do about it. Try using the commuting time to complete tasks that are time-consuming but do not require too much focus – such as checking your emails, sending memos, organizing your to-do list, researching for presentations, online shopping, etc. this way you are limiting the time wasted.

SmartPhones

It's lovely to have a phone that can do so many things – emails, games, online shopping, banking, etc. On the other hand, the smartphone can become an addictive time killer. Resist chatting/talking on the phone more than you need. If your calls take longer

than 2-3 minutes, you are doing it wrong. Communicate instead through chat apps – which allow you to reply in your time.

Resist the impulse to “just check the notification” for Facebook, Twitter, games, emails and so on. You would think you would just take a look, but then you would be tempted to play a game, answer another email, check out the offers and before you know half-an-hour has passed while you were on the smartphone.

Friendly Chatting

While it is important that you maintain a good rapport with your colleagues at work, it is best to keep chatting limited to coffee/lunch breaks. Friendly chatting can steal up to 2-3 hours of your time every day. Discourage friends and family reaching you on the phone unless it is strictly necessary. Have the friendly phone chats over the weekends, while you commute to and from your work or in the evening.

Surfing the Net

Surfing the Net is one of the biggest gobblers of time. Whether you start by reading the headlines or watching a YouTube update, you will find spiraling into surfing for this and that and before you know it 1-2 hours have gone. Stay focused when you surf the Net; use it only for what you need for the task at hand.

Social Media Networks

Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and so on are addictive. You feel you will check it out for 2-3 minutes and end up spending 2-3 hours over it. Allot time for this purpose so it would not interfere with your work schedule.

Chapter 41. Conclusion

If you are reading these lines, that means that you are on the right path of increasing your productivity, overcoming laziness, and getting closer to achieving your goals. The mere fact that you have read this entire guide shows that you are already on the right, shiny path. Now the only thing left to do is to focus on what you have learned and start completing your tasks.

Whenever you feel like procrastinating again (which, my friend, you will), you can always come back to the hacks and go through the lessons again to remind yourself that postponing your daily tasks translates into pushing your goals and achievements farther away.

Laziness is not worth more than being productive and successful!

Chapter 42. Introduction

For most of us, procrastination is subconscious. We do not choose to avoid a task intentionally, rather it just sorts of “happens.” The majority of procrastination is controlled by the left side of the brain. The brain is composed of two hemispheres which work both independently and together to create memories, actions, and reactions. The left side is responsible for more analytical thinking and reasoning, while the right side tends to be more creative. On the left side resides the Ego.

Why do we procrastinate?

If your brain tells you, “this will never happen” or “you will probably fail anyway” that is your ego talking and creating doubt. By creating doubt, your brain is prompted to release certain chemicals much like those when you experience pain. This makes you feel better and the memory of that pain (albeit imagined and minor) is smoothed over and pushed into short term memory where it can be promptly forgotten about. In contrast, when we are productive or successful our brains release altogether different chemicals that evoke happiness. It's the anticipation of these happiness chemicals that make us crave success and completion; the issue is that the pain of our own ego is getting in the way.

This is the main subconscious reason we procrastinate, but the same response applies to conscious procrastination.

Example:

Felicity has exams next week but revision is so boring and dull. She hates reading and lacks the ability to focus so it seems pointless anyway. While she wants to get good results simply sitting in her room for hours at a time to re-read her notes has no appeal. Instead, she does things to make the time go by faster or to make the experience more pleasant so that she will be able to focus better when she does finally revise such as making herself a snack, stretching, letting the dog out so she won't have to interrupt herself later, and while she has every intention of studying by the time she gets down to it there's only an hour before dinner time and she has to start cooking.

While Felicity hasn't intentionally procrastinated her time away, she

has also semi-consciously put her revision off. Her brain has perceived the revision as a painful and undesired experience and so it has created alternative activities to distract her from doing it. Her lack of time management has made these activities a priority over her revision and she has not revised, allowing the pain chemicals to win by giving in rather than pushing through their response.

Felicity's ego kicks in to tell her that she wouldn't have learned it anyway, and she can always study later or for the next test. In reality, she will probably do the same thing next time.

There are three reasons that Felicity is procrastinating:

Comprehension

She struggles to understand the material and her understanding of what the actual task is makes it hard so she would rather do an easier task she understands.

Worth

She perceives that the revision has value, but that it would have better value if the environment were suited therefore, she focuses on the environment in an attempt to improve the value. This isn't successful even if it is well-meaning.

Pain

She doesn't enjoy the revision so her brain equates the activity with pain and responds accordingly.

Faulty wiring

Some of us simply can't help our procrastination because of how we are wired. This is especially true of night owls and morning people. If you're the sort of person who wakes up bleary-eyed and can't function before coffee it's unlikely you are going to be productive without your morning coffee ritual. What you have done is created a method to lull your brain into a productive, or at least working state. That isn't procrastination, it's just forcing yourself to be productive when you naturally aren't.

Think about your habits when you're alone. When are you most awake and most likely to do things you want to do? If it's something you want bad enough you will go outside of these times to do it (work, special trip, event, etc.) but given ideal conditions when would you be productive? Take the night owl as an example. Night

owls often find they want to be up at night because that's when their brains are firing on all cylinders, all their creative juices are running, and they can get the most done. Those are the people that instead of sitting down after dinner want to clean the house, go out, and get on with things that need doing. They're the opposite of the people who jump out of bed feeling the same way and raring to go.

Tip: Take note of this productive time for you. It will be the key to conquering your productivity later.

Understanding when you are productive is a step in the right direction, but the two main things that will lead you to success are knowing why you procrastinate and creating a goal that is more important than the reward procrastination gives your brain chemically. If you're not procrastinating because you're avoiding something bad, or because it's an unproductive time of day why else would you be unproductive?

The answer lies in our perception of worth.

Everything in our lives has some form of perceived value, even our time. Our time is valuable because we donate it to activities in an exchange. When we procrastinate about something it can sometimes be because we perceive that our time is more valuable than the task so we put off what seems an uneven exchange because we don't want a bad deal. Like Felicity, she felt it was more important to create the perfect atmosphere for her revision than the revision itself. This is what will help you create better goals to get around your procrastination. By assigning your tasks better-perceived worth your brain will see their completion as a reward rather than a loss which in turn will give you a better likelihood of completing them.

Cogito ergo sums

Philosopher René Descartes created the notion that we are the sum of our own thoughts, in fact, his famous adage of “I think, therefore I am” has come to be part of the foundation which makes up much of our understanding of the ego today. When we think our brains instantly create a response, it is the ultimate cause and effect. Our brain has already responded before the next thought is even created because the chemical response is faster than the neurons can communicate to create the thought. You need to harness your

thoughts if you are going to beat your procrastination.

Simply put, you may not actually be a procrastinator, your brain isn't wired for procrastination by itself, but it is using its own natural processes to allow you to procrastinate instead of being productive. By telling yourself that you are a procrastinator or that you are procrastinating you may be making the decision to consciously do so. You are creating your own excuse, even though your brain may be capable of it, and you are reinforcing the behavior so that when the time comes you are going to be more likely to procrastinate.

The Addict

When it comes to fixing a problem in your thoughts there's nothing better than conscious choice. Fixing conscious procrastination is by far the easiest type, and it's something you should be doing even if you know you are likely to procrastinate for other reasons. You can start by practicing some simple affirmations any time you feel you are procrastinating. Start by calling yourself a former procrastinator. By putting your procrastination firmly in the past, you are consciously choosing to move on.

You have already recognized you have a problem, so it would be redundant to repeat that process. Instead, figure out what it is about procrastination that you find rewarding. For many procrastinators, there is a certain thrill of success in the nick of time. By leaving things down to the wire and still making it we are proving that we could be successful, and proving that we could do everything else as well, often with bigger aplomb than if we had simply finished and moved on.

Take for example someone who is always late. By arriving at the last minute and being the last in the door everyone notices them and they become the center of attention. It's addicting. Procrastination can itself be an addiction because we become addicted to the stress and pain which eventually give us a huge rush of relief much like a drug addict feels when they get their fix. Logically you know you have a problem which needs thinking it's just taking the actual steps to fix it which is the issue because the addiction means you don't want to. You don't want to give up that feel-good rush because it's a greater reward than the success alone and your brain knows this.

Time Management Risk Factor

It's a proven fact that the further away a deadline is the more likely we are to put off a project. The reason for this is that we perceive that the reward is in the distant future, therefore while we may do the task already, we won't get our reward quickly enough. This results in procrastination until the risk of the project being unfinished is great enough that we feel the need to do it. It's similar to instant gratification – it's knowing that the gratification is not going to be instant so we put the project off.

This can often be seen as a lack of conscientiousness because you're less likely to be industrious about the task and get it done quickly regardless of the deadline. The key with this is to understand that while it's not great, in this instance you're still getting it done. Similarly, if you're prone to impulsiveness you're also likely to be a procrastinator because you're easily led astray. You're waiting for that rush of chemistry from the last minute the same as someone who puts off non-urgent projects until the last minute.

Success and perfection

Something vital that many procrastinators fail to realize is that they are blatantly afraid of success. The fear of actually succeeding, of finishing the task on time and easily, not only diminishes the perceived value but also leaves the burning question of “what then?” As humans, we are obsessed with the question about what comes next, whether it's next week, next day, or even the next life.

There are two forms of perfection – one that is achievable and one that is neurotic. The neurotic type is the one that causes procrastination.

Practical perfectionism is what makes productivity because you are rewarded at the end for completing the job to a perfect standard. It is attainable, and it's soothing; while neurotic perfectionism is more likely to cause stress and anxiety. A neurosis like this is akin to a phobia because you are like a person terrified to fly. While you say you want to travel, the very fear of flying prevents you getting on a plane, so too does your fear of actually attaining perfection cause you to procrastinate and self-sabotage what would have been a productive time.

Tip: It's easy to see all forms of perfection the same at first because you know you have goals or tasks to complete and want them to be

of a perfect standard. We will look more at prioritizing yourself later on. For now, simply consider if success is reasonable or not as the quantifier for perfectionism.

A subconscious fear of success is also a fear of failure and this limbo is another cause for procrastination because we dither, caught between the two fears. There are several things that can lead to a fear of success and most of these relate to change. A successful future could mean change – success at work, success at weight loss, success in love. When we are successful it signals movement in our life that we are going somewhere that is as yet unknown and the unknown is terrifying. By procrastinating we are putting off that scary future, even if it is a desirable one. Change, no matter what it is, is a powerful force and one that can indeed cause pain and suffering. Yet again, we see the brain working towards protecting us from an event we perceive as painful before we've even thought about it.

At this point you should have some insight as to why you yourself procrastinate. It's very true that most of these reasons lead back not to laziness but fear. We are afraid. Tackling fear is not easy because it's all in your mind. So how can you fix something that happens before you even think it? How can you change your chemical make up?

Chapter 43. Procrastination and Laziness

I will not start by defining laziness and procrastination. That is pretty easy to find. I believe you are reading this book because you know what they are and want to change your life for the better. We are all guilty of laziness and procrastination. You are probably lucky enough to have found this book and read it up to this point.

Laziness vs. Procrastination

Most people confuse procrastination with laziness, but they are quite different. Laziness is an inactive process while procrastination is an active process. Procrastination involves choosing to do something less important instead of the crucial project while laziness is inactivity, inability to act or unwillingness to take action. Most procrastinators lead a busy life. They are always engaged in easy and enjoyable tasks as opposed to seemingly tough jobs that are more important or rewarding.

The most significant consequence of procrastination is not the lost time that you could have used on productive projects but the guilt and shame that comes with knowing that you are procrastinating. When you procrastinate, you feel bad about it. If you procrastinate for some time, you feel demotivated. In extreme cases, procrastination causes a lack of focus in life. It leads to depression, job loss, and failed careers.

Laziness and procrastination could steal your dreams and destroy your life. The reasons for procrastination may vary from one person to another, but the consequences of the negative habits are similar. You probably procrastinate because of hidden fears, stress, lack of motivation, or other reasons we shall discuss later. Whatever the reasons, you need to take action as soon as possible because laziness and procrastination have a more damaging impact than you probably think. Here is how they destroy your life.

Losing precious time

Your life is measured by time. How much of your life have you wasted by putting off that important task till tomorrow or the day after tomorrow? You can imagine how much time you lose by not taking action. You will realize later that you are a decade older, but you have not achieved your goals because you procrastinated.

How did you waste all the time? Unlike most other things in life, you can't go back in time to make changes you wanted in your life. You will have to live with the regrets and frustrations, especially when you see the progress of the people who took action while you procrastinated. Don't waste time; pursue what you desire.

Missing golden opportunities

How many opportunities for growth have you missed because you didn't act? This might make you want to kick yourself. We have all missed essential meetings, business deals, trips, and learning opportunities because of laziness or procrastination.

What you don't want to acknowledge is that the opportunity could have changed your life. Unfortunately, golden chances are rare. They say Christmas comes but once a year. You are never assured of a second chance. Procrastination and laziness snatch opportunities from you and make you miserable.

Broken dreams

If you don't take action now, nothing will change! The knowledge and the desire to achieve will take you nowhere if you don't take action. If you want to achieve fitness goals, take the first bold step. Pay gym subscription and start working out. If you're going to start a business, research, gather resources and establish your first outlet.

Have you ever found yourself wondering why you can't do something you want to do so poorly? You need to explore the reasons behind your actions. The chances are that you are lazy or procrastinating. We all want a great future and have dreams of what we want to achieve. It is the only way to have a better life and enjoy the fruits of our labor. If you are lazy, you will regret the lost time and broken dreams that you never did anything to achieve.

Ruining your career

In most career opportunities, your work affects the results and determines your career growth. Procrastinating will make you miss deadlines, fail to make sales, or miss important meetings. Even though you might get away with it and retain your job, you will not meet your weekly, monthly, or annual targets. Your boss won't be pleased with you and you will undoubtedly miss out on promotions and career development opportunities. Worse than that, you could lose your job and ruin your career entirely. You can try hiding laziness and procrastination for a while, but the consequences.

Self-esteem issues

Sometimes low self-esteem causes us to postpone important tasks that could change our lives for better. But what you need to realize is that procrastinating worsens the situation. Taking a bold step gives you confidence and inspires you to accomplish your goals.

When you are in doubt, don't hesitate; take a step towards your goal. If you wait for too long, you will lower your self-esteem and destroy your life. When you have esteem issues, you will miss out on other opportunities and feel inferior in front of your equals. You might end up feeling less valuable, and your actions could sabotage your life. Focus on building self-esteem. Instead of believing that you can do something, take the first step, and remove all doubts.

Making the wrong choices

Lazy people often make the wrong decisions. Why? They don't take time to research or analyze all the facts before making the decision. If you are lazy and you have to choose between completing a specific task today and earning a bonus or completing it later on and missing the bonus, you will probably opt for the latter.

People who procrastinate also have the same problem. They put off complex decision-making processes until they have a lot to analyze and too little time to do it effectively. They experience the pressure and end up making decisions based on their emotions. Poor choices lead to negative thoughts that affect our happiness and quality of life.

Guilt and regret

When you fail to complete a task at the appropriate time, you feel guilty and frightened. Your confidence in your abilities goes down, and you start spending more time regretting rather than working to

improve your life. You also don't feel comfortable around the people who completed their tasks on time and achieved their goals.

Bad reputation

Nobody wants someone who doesn't deliver. We all dislike unreliable people who give empty promises. Procrastination and laziness damage your reputation considerably when the people around you discover that you cannot be trusted. The habit grows stronger as you get used to it. You no longer feel the urge to do something even when you fail your friends and loved ones. People will eventually stop trusting you with essential projects and might withdraw from you to let you clean up the mess. A bad reputation will make you lose business deals. You will lose friends and great opportunities because of procrastination.

Poor health

Yes! You heard it right. Laziness and procrastination lead to health issues associated with stress, anxiety, and depression. Procrastination makes you work under pressure if you have to meet the deadlines. It increases the intensity of stress related to a particular task and makes it hard to meet expectations. You lose trust in your ability. Anxiety and depression crop in, and we all know they are silent killers.

Similarly, laziness will make you skip workouts, and this will adversely affect your health.

The good news is that you have the power to overcome laziness and procrastination. I am here to help you with concrete concepts and approaches that will guarantee results. Take control of your life and live the life of your dreams free of laziness and procrastination.

Common Signs That You Are Lazy

Most procrastinators and lazy people deny it. Nobody wants to be lazy, even that old friend who spends most of the time doing nothing. We all want to show we are productive, hardworking and diligent in our duties. But the truth is that we are holding on to bad habits that could ruin our lives.

Are you ever busy with unnecessary tasks? Do you spend most of your time on social media? This could be laziness in disguise. You need to do something about these habits before it is too late. I am here to help you. This book is for you if you do the following

things.

Purchasing too many things

A lazy person wants to buy anything that seems to make life easy. Unfortunately, most of the things lazy people buy are useless and only help them to do simple tasks. If you find yourself buying many unnecessary products, you are lazy! Unnecessary items lead to more laziness until you take charge of your life and decide to change the situation.

Taking a break too often

Do you find yourself considering a break every 20 minutes of doing pretty simple tasks? You are only looking for time to get lazy. When things heat up, and you have to complete a particular job, you feel like taking a break if you are a lazy person.

You spend time with the people you hate

Do you spend your time with people you don't like? Changing your social life requires effort and dedication. You don't have to spend time with annoying people just because they are around you. It is best to star alone and recharge, heal, and grow rather than spend time with the wrong people. If you lack the energy and motivation to visit those you love, this is a sign that you are lazy.

You pile dirty clothes

Most lazy people don't put away their clothes; they pile them on the couch. After some time, they start another pile of clothes, and the process continues. You know you need to change this habit, but you always find yourself piling laundry in all the wrong places. Laziness begets laziness. When you accumulate clutter in your living room, you take more time to find what you want. You see an excuse to be late for meetings and other important events. Don't find reasons; accept that you are lazy and decide to change your life.

You don't wash your face

You should wash your face at least twice daily. If you don't feel like washing your face in the morning or at night before sleep, you are a lazy person. It is hilarious how lazy people find excuses to push away the thoughts of doing essential tasks. If you feel like watching TV instead of brushing your teeth or washing your face, you are in the right place, reading the right book.

You have 96 reasons to skip the gym

Regular workouts are a healthy habit that everyone should adopt. You know all the benefits of exercise, and you probably have personal goals to stay fit and healthy. But strangely you always have reasons to skip the gym. A common reason that crops up is being too tired for the gym. Do you know what that means? You are lazy. Do you always say you don't have enough time? And how come you find enough time to scroll Facebook and Instagram?

Being too busy

Being overly busy is a common sign of laziness. If you fill your 'tight' schedule with unnecessary tasks, you will never get things done. Most people are hiding behind their busy schedules, but they are lazy in disguise. Prioritize your life. Focus on completing the tasks that matter most and leave out unnecessary things that drag your development. If you are always tired of doing things and don't get essential projects completed on time, it is time to change.

Approximating important things

Being lazy is fun at first. You quickly spot another lazy person in the workplace and become friends instantly. If your friend can't take time to verify essential details or cross-check facts on the internet, you are a lazy person. Why? You are friends because you share the same habits. Laziness is evident in most situations. If you assume facts or approximate crucial things in life, it is best to change your life before laziness costs you.

Reassigning tasks

Sometimes delegating duties is quite crucial if you are a manager. Lazy people want to feel like managers all the time. Even if you are a business executive, you will have to do some tasks by yourself. Do you find yourself assigning simple tasks to people around you? Do you ask a colleague to make a call on your behalf? Do you ask the intern in your workplace to open an envelope for you? You depict classic signs of laziness.

Using lift often instead of stairs

Stairs are a lazy person's worst nightmare. Why just last week, I remember waking up panting and out of breath. That's when I realized that I'd dreamt of walking up a flight of stairs. Yes, probably man's worst invention, albeit inadvertently. Why climb

the stairs when you have something that'll take you up without burning a single calorie?

Using lifts instead of stairs

You have read hundreds of articles on how using stairs can help you burn calories, but stairs are your worst nightmare. You tried it only once, and you still recall sweat, panting, and gasping for breath. Why should you use stairs while a lift will get you there without lifting your leg? If these are your thoughts,

Falling asleep in awkward positions

We all have that one friend who seems to fall asleep anywhere and, in any position, regardless of the task he or she is doing. They probably can't touch their toes during a yoga session but will take any shape when they fall to sleep. You try out all yoga poses in their scary sleeping positions. If you don't have such a friend, you could be the one! If you fall asleep anywhere, the chances are that you are lazy.

Are you using a car when you should walk?

I am sure you have used your bike or car to the nearby shop at one point in your life. This is a common sign of laziness commonly referred to as a locomotive attack. Lazy people are fueling the demand for locomotives despite the warning that they contribute to global warming. You also want to walk, but you never leave your car.

Texting the person next door

Walking sucks! It involves muscle contractions, stretching, contraction, and the use of energy. You agree with this statement if you are lazy. Do you wish there are robots to do stuff for you? You are glad you have a phone; you can text or call a person who is 10 meters away. It is crucial to stop this habit before laziness takes over your life. It starts gradually, grows fast, and destroys your life.

Holding your pee for too long

Lazy people have inhumanly power to hold their pee. It is strange how a lazy person can challenge the laws of nature. If lazy people can keep their pee for so long, how long do you think they can go without taking a bath? That's a story for another day.

Being afraid of sunlight

Vampire bats and lazy people fear sunlight. They would rather spend years indoors than go out and be productive. Most lazy people are nocturnal. They don't like the sunshine that seems to hurt the skin and eyes or warm their bodies. Here are more signs that you could be a lazy person:

- 1.You find yourself watching uninteresting TV shows just because the remote is on the other side of the room
- 2.You like motorized chairs and would instead move your chair to the furthest cupboard to pick files than stand up and walk.
- 3.You wait for the lift to get back while the stairs are right beside you.
- 4.You take time before applying makeup or going for a haircut. You prefer using energy elsewhere.
- 5.You ignore serious matters just because you don't want to engage in intricate procedures to solve the problems. Do you ignore minor damages on your car to avoid the mess associated with insurance claims?
- 6.You are secretly happy when your boss canceled meetings.
- 7.You wouldn't check your mails unless you ordered something from an online store.
- 8.You drink your favorite beverage from a bowl or jug because you can't take a moment to clean the dishes.
- 9.You find yourself typing with one hand while the other is busy in an idle position
10. You selectively ignore some text messages
11. You eat cold food because warming it in a microwave seems like a tough task.
12. You're 2 minutes late for something, so you convince yourself that it'd just be better to skip it entirely.
13. If you are late for some task, you decide to skip the whole event entirely.
14. You leave everything to karma; you don't have the energy to fight back or revenge against offenders. (I am not urging you to

take revenge though)

15. You find yourself lifting your legs for someone to clean under you.

If you have any of these signs, you are a lazy person. You have read this book to this point because you want to change and become productive. This is the first step towards living a fulfilling life. You cannot achieve your dreams if you are lazy. Even if you show all the signs I have highlighted above, you need to understand that laziness is a habit that can be changed. Read on to find out how.

Are you a procrastinator?

There are numerous ways to know if you are a procrastinator. Each person has his or her special way of putting off tasks. In this chapter, we shall look at some of the most common ways to know if you are a procrastinator.

● You Start Strong, But When It Gets Hard, You Give Up

You are in love with new beginnings. You cannot wait to read that interesting personal growth book you just bought—it looks exciting and the introduction is inspiring. You cannot wait to get started on a project because your peers consider it prestigious or you thought it was easy.

When the work begins, however, the love and excitement burn out and you start thinking, “I thought it would be easier than this.” When the realities of the task set in, the only thing you can talk about is, “how hard it is” and the mistake you made by picking something you could not handle. The next thing you do is abandon/ give up on the task: giving up is your only way out of ‘too hard’ or ‘too stressful’ situations.

● You Have No Time, You Are Always Busy

It's not bad to have all your time occupied. However, the question is what occupies your time? What are you busy doing? You see, being busy does not mean you are efficient. The people who are always occupied, rushing from one place to another, and doing one task after another have a problem planning their time, have poor prioritization, or they lack the ability to say ‘no’. They are so busy handling the tasks they ought to have completed yesterday but because they were watching a new TV series then, they have to do it now, when it is only a few minutes due.

If your day is always abuzz with activity, you have to do regular evaluations of how productive you are because although you may be busy and your day may be full, you may be wasting time and being unproductive. The busyness may be a result of poor time management and procrastination

● You Are Often Too Tired to Get Things Done

When you get home from school/work, you feel justified to be too tired to do anything else such as complete an assignment, cook, or iron clothes. You tell yourself or anyone who tries to get you to work on something, “don’t you know I was working all day,” or “hey, I can’t do that; I have been working my brain all day in school.” What is funny is that despite your ‘tiredness,’ you will watch Netflix until the wee hours of the morning.

● Lack of Organization

You have no schedules and timelines. If you have To-do lists, the tasks lack organization based on importance or urgency. You simply pick tasks spontaneously: you select them randomly and every likelihood is that easier and smaller tasks will catch your eye first. If you run your life like this, you are letting procrastination ruin your life.

● You Are Afraid of Success and Failure

You are afraid to do things because you cannot trust yourself to handle the outcome, whether it is success or failure. Some of us are afraid that we may not do a good enough job and we, therefore, delay getting started. Others are afraid that they may do a good job and that their success may expose them or open doors they do not think they are ready to walk through; their resolve is to put off tasks perhaps until they are sure.

● You Have No Vision

You cannot see a possible or favorable outcome ahead. You do not have a clear vision of what your tomorrow could be like; you are living in the moment.

Whilst it is good to live and enjoy our present moments, it is a tragedy to have no idea of what your future could look like. Lack of vision is a motivation to procrastinate. If you cannot see how completing a task today shall benefit your tomorrow, you will lack the motivation to get started.

● Excuses

We can define excuses as true or untrue believable reasons why you did or did not do something. This means that even when the reason why is sincere, it still is an excuse. These 'reasons why' are very unpleasant especially when you have been trusted with responsibility. Unfortunately, most of us can never get anything done right or on time, but there is always a reason to justify why we did not.

If you find yourself not performing tasks as expected and feeling justified by your excuses whether true or made up, you need to check your organization and prioritization because for some reason, you are procrastinating.

● Lack of Concentration/Mind Drifts

Your concentration/focus spans to five seconds after which your mind will spot something else it would rather focus on, something that is not as boring as what you are doing. Often, this 'better thing' is a fantasy.

You are daydreaming about the future, a beautiful clip of how things would be played when you ought to be finishing the project. If you are not daydreaming, worry and anxiety are stealing your focus.

● Perfectionism

You are obsessed with doing things the right way and you cannot take it when done otherwise. A perfectionist will always wait for the 'right time' and the 'right conditions' to get anything done. Unfortunately, the world is not that fair and most times, the favorable conditions will not be there when you need them and things have to get done anyway. If you are delaying, seeking for perfect, you are unknowingly procrastinating.

Now that we have looked at how to know you are a procrastinator, let us look at how procrastination affects your life.

How Procrastination Affects Your Life

Procrastination can affect your lives in many ways. Here's a few to consider:

● It Will Cost You Your Happiness

Deciding to postpone an important task will have a big impact on

your happiness especially when the future in which you planned to do it becomes your present when you still have not managed to tackle it. For instance, when you spend the day watching a new series instead of revising for an exam, you will bust at the seams with feelings of regret and guilt.

The procrastination cycle starts with hope (that you will do it), which turns to anxiety (when you struggle to finish a task with no time left). This then leads to self-criticism (when you could not complete it/do it very well). It then moves to guilt and then comes regret.

Habitual procrastination can lead you to dissatisfaction in every area of your life starting from your workplace or school, relationships with others, and your relationship with yourself. Procrastinators will use lies to explain their delays or failures. Even if the other party believes your made-up excuses, deep inside, you know the real reason why you failed and that you could have avoided it (but somehow couldn't).

How Procrastination Makes You Unhappy

It will lower your self-esteem: When you cannot complete important tasks on time and you know it was out of your neglect, you are likely to experience a decreased level of self-esteem. You lose belief and confidence in yourself, which automatically turns into a loss of happiness.

Lost opportunities: How many opportunities have you lost because of procrastination? Have you not seen your friends grab those same opportunities and succeed when you could not (and maybe you have better skills?). One thing about opportunities is that they knock at your door only once. If seized, they may have improved your life; it feels bad when you know you missed out because you procrastinated.

Damaged relationships: We have seen that when you don't do things in time, you will probably use a lie to explain yourself. Often, the liar is the only person believing the lies: other people do not buy it especially if you use the same tactic repeatedly. This is how you lose friends. You will also damage your love relationship if you are always late for dates or when you keep postponing an important talk. Who would be happy without friends and on an unstable relationship?

Killing time: Time is one of the most important resources we have. If time just passes you by, you are at a disadvantage: important things will pass you by too. Unfortunately, procrastinators seem to place a huge emphasis on time but they waste it and get mad when they realize they lost it. It is a terrible feeling when you cannot turn back the hands of time; when time goes, you lose it forever. You have to live with the feelings of regret and frustration with yourself.

● It Will Compromise Your Health

Procrastination will most likely interfere with your health in these two ways: stress and behaviors that have a poor impact on your health.

The Stress Impact

Your stress levels will rise if you are rushing to complete an important task when it is almost due and the work is much more

than you expected. Chronic stress causes various health issues such as headaches, flu, high blood pressure, and heart diseases.

Stress also interferes with quality of sleep since it causes restlessness. Lack of enough sleep will affect your health and decrease your productivity (where you cannot focus or are struggling to stay awake during the day when you are supposed to be working)

Stress can also lead a person down the road of substance abuse as a coping tool. Stress will direct you towards drugs in an effort to disengage from reality-this only makes the situation worse.

If you cannot manage stress, you put yourself at risk of cardiovascular diseases-effective stress coping mechanisms are important factors for maintaining cardiovascular health.

Other Behaviors That Are Health and Immunity Hazards

Procrastinators portray poor wellness behaviors such as reluctance to eat well, exercise regularly, or have enough sleep. They cannot eat well because of stress or because they barely have time to get a good meal (because they are probably busy working last minute to complete a task). Most procrastinators postpone exercise and sleep because there are a million things to do (most of them being unimportant).

Most chronic procrastinators also neglect health maintenance because there seems to be important things begging for attention before going for a routine check-up or treatment. This weakens the body. Researchers have found that Procrastinators have low immunity and therefore fall sick often because of the stress and cortisol hormone build up in the body, something that wreaks havoc on the immune system.

● It Will Ruin Your Career

Your performance at work depends on your work ethic. How you work reflects on your achievements and your excellence. If you continually put off work tasks, you are not likely to meet your targets. You will never submit an important report on time or close a deal with a client when you are required to. What do you think your employer will feel about this? You might be a very good employee and your boss may not fire you; however, you may never grow: no one will consider you for promotions because you will

never get the work done. If placed in a higher position, you may stall the entire organization.

● You Will Make Poor Decisions

A procrastinator is often a last-minute decision-maker. This kind of person will make a decision based on pressure, and from that standpoint, your decision will always be poor. When time is running out, you have no chance to consider the odds, consequences, or better options. You'll go with the first idea because you have to, and most of the time, this idea is not the best you could have come up with if you had time to think about it.

● It Affects Your Character and Ruins Your Reputation

What if you put off things and end up not doing them at all? How are people going to perceive you when you never do what you say you will do? Nobody wants empty promises. If you do not deliver as promised, you not only damage your reputation, you also damage your character too.

With your reputation ruined, people cannot trust you. No one will risk depending on you and as such, people will hold back on offering you opportunities. They say a habit easily becomes a character. When you procrastinate often, it becomes your character, and this develops into a personality: it becomes who you are; you know it is destroying your life but you cannot help it. This pulls down your self-esteem and confidence.

Do you see how procrastination can ruin your life, how it will steal your joy, health, job, friends, and even relationships? Now that you can see what it can do, you will agree that procrastination is not something you want to keep in your life anymore.

Chapter 44. Why do We Procrastinate

To fully appreciate the reasons we procrastinate, it's important to distinguish between our present and future selves. They coexist, but are always in conflict with each other. There's a continuous disconnect between them because they're driven by entirely different things.

The Present Self is attracted to activities that promise immediate gratification. The Future Self is interested in activities that promise a "payoff" down the road.

For example, the Future Self is willing to exercise to get into shape. The Present Self would rather sit on the couch and watch television.

Once you understand the disassociation between these two parts of your identity, you'll fully appreciate the individual reasons you delay taking action.

This section of The Procrastination Cure will explore these reasons in detail. As we discuss each of them, consider how they affect the decision-making process between your present and future selves.

Fear of Failure

Fear plays a significant role in our tendency to procrastinate. It manifests in various ways, but one of the strongest is through fear of failure.

We hesitate to act because we're fearful of doing something wrong. Or we fear that our actions will deliver poor results. And importantly, it doesn't matter whether our presumed failure happens privately or publicly. Both are unpleasant outcomes, and many of us will go to great lengths to avoid them.

This fearfulness can stem from a number of things. For example, lack of familiarity with a given task or process may cause us to hesitate. The unfamiliarity makes the outcome of our actions more uncertain, which exacerbates our fear of failure. We end up deliberating whether it's necessary to act immediately or if the task in question can be delayed.

Our fear of failure may also be prompted by a past experience that was embarrassing or traumatic in some way. For example, suppose you once bombed while speaking in front of a large audience. The

experience was embarrassing for you, enough so that it has become ingrained in your memory. Unless you've since participated in successful speaking engagements that mitigated the feelings behind that earlier traumatic experience, you might be disinclined to speak in front of an audience again. At the very least, you'd look for ways to delay doing so.

Fear of failure can also surface as the result of repeated indoctrination about a presumed inability to do something. For example, a child who's told over and over that she's a terrible student might grow to fear taking exams, and procrastinate studying for them. A salesperson who's frequently told that his sales approach is ineffective might put off cold calling new prospects.

Some people - I include myself in this camp - harbor a natural aversion to trying new things. This aversion, which often prompts feelings of anxiety, makes us reluctant to take action. In fact, some of us would delay taking action indefinitely if doing so was an option.

How To Overcome Fear Of Failure

First, realize that fear of failure is part of human nature. Our egos are entwined with our ability to succeed at whatever we pursue. The idea that we might fail is vexing to us.

Second, redefine the meaning of failure as it relates to your life. Rather than defining it as the result of a character flaw - e.g. you're destined to fail because you're imperfect - redefine it as simple feedback that a given action or tactic isn't working. Once you do so, you can come up with a different approach that has a greater chance of success. In other words, view failure as useful data rather than an indignity you're forced to endure.

Third, consider that some of the world's most successful people failed miserably at various points in their lives. Their failures didn't stop them from achieving greatness. On the contrary, failure propelled them forward, filling them with the desire to succeed.

For example, Abraham Lincoln lost numerous elections before finally becoming President of the United States. Film director Steven Spielberg was rejected by the University of Southern California three times due to poor grades. J.K Rowling, author the blockbuster Harry Potter series, claims she "failed on an epic scale" but her failures drove her to success.

Along the same lines, basketball star Michael Jordan had this to say about his time in the NBA and how failure affected him:

I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times, I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.

To overcome fear of failure, think about the worst possible outcome. It's probably not as bad as you imagine. Then, redefine what failure means to you. Consider how you might leverage it - remember, it's just feedback - rather than letting it stop you from taking action.

Fear of Success

Fear of success can be just as debilitating as fear of failure. It stems from an innate worry about one's ability to live up to expectations - either personal expectations or those of other people. To that end, it causes many folks to postpone taking action.

For example, suppose your boss announces the launch of a new division of your company. He wants you to spearhead it. All you have to do is accept the offer.

You may initially be excited by the prospects of heading your own division. You'll enjoy more visibility, more autonomy, a promotion, and a healthy pay raise. But soon after, doubts surface, causing you to question your abilities.

Will you be able to lead the new division to success? Will you be able to meet your boss's expectations? What happens if you stumble, and the new division flails under your leadership?

These and other doubts, left unchallenged, can fester to the point that they paralyze you.

Fear of success can also stem from concerns about the challenges that success will bring. For example, suppose you turn your company's new division into a major contender in its industry. What will happen next?

Will your boss ask you to lead an even larger project, which will pose even greater challenges? Would taking on this hypothetical larger project set you up for potential failure? Will your continued and high-profile success cause you to lose your identity?

Sometimes, fear of success is borne from guilt. For example, you might believe that your past successes were due to factors outside your control. Consequently, you feel undeserving of recognition and the opportunities your past successes have afforded you. You feel like an imposter.

Like fear of failure, fear of success is an act of self-sabotage. Regardless of what sets it off, the result is the same: the individual procrastinates.

How To Overcome Fear Of Success

The challenge with conquering this fear is that it's easy to miss. We often mistake fear of success as simple procrastination instead of investigating it as a cause of our procrastination.

First, look for signs that you're delaying taking action because you're fearful of success. Ask yourself whether receiving recognition concerns you. Are you worried that others might see you as a fraud? Are you nervous that you may not deliver as expected?

Second, ask yourself what might happen in the event you succeed. You'll nearly always find that your greatest fears are unfounded. Remember, fear, in all of its manifestations, is powerful because it hides from view. When we confront it head on, it contracts.

Third, ask yourself whether the outcome of success is consistent with your goals. Using our earlier example, suppose your company's new division becomes a major success under your capable direction. Will your success help you to achieve what you consider important in your life (e.g. a larger salary, more visibility, etc.)? If so, you can look forward to meeting these objectives by taking action. If not, your success will have minimal impact, and thus shouldn't be a concern.

Either way, this exercise will reveal that your presumed success shouldn't cause you to be fearful at all.

Confronting the fear that's causing you to procrastinate is the most effective way to disarm it. As with confronting fear of failure, you'll find that your fear of success is largely unfounded.

Perfectionism

Perfectionism is a common cause of procrastination. Perfectionists hold themselves to ultra-high standards and won't accept anything less. The upside of this trait is that it can spur an individual to

produce work of amazing quality and startling depth. The downside is that it can prevent him or her from moving forward in the first place.

I grew up as a perfectionist. Everything I produced had to be flawless. This character quirk, which manifested in me as a child, persisted as I entered high school, and then college. It followed me as I entered Corporate America, and later as I left the corporate world to build my business.

How did it affect me? First, it completely skewed my perspective on what constituted acceptable work.

Second, I became habitually inclined to procrastinate whenever I had the slightest feeling that I would be unable to turn in flawless work.

Third, the more I put things off due to my perfectionist tendencies, the unhappier I became. Procrastination led to increased stress and frustration. In the end, my perfectionism was a compulsion that caused me to delay taking action on nearly every project. That, in turn, ultimately made me miserable.

Can you relate to this? Do you recognize some of what I've described in your own process? If so, you know firsthand how procrastination can be a symptom of perfectionism.

How to Overcome Perfectionism

First, identify the difference in reward between delivering something that's perfect and delivering something that's nearly perfect, but flawed in some minor way. You'll usually find that the difference is tiny - perhaps so tiny as to be unnoticeable. And if it's unnoticeable, it's hardly worth fretting over.

Second, consider the costs of being a perfectionist. Think of the many ways in which perfectionism is a liability. For example, it paralyzes you into a state of inaction; it increases your stress level; and it causes you to miss potentially rewarding opportunities.

Third, question why you want to be perfect. In most cases, you'll find there's no justifiable reason. Rather, there's an intrinsic fear of being unable to meet expectations, even when those expectations are unrealistic.

Lastly, realize that your efforts can deliver value even if your work is imperfect. For example, scoring a 95% on an exam may be less

appealing than receiving a perfect score, but it's better than scoring a 70% or 80%. Mowing your lawn once a week has value even if your hedges aren't perfectly trimmed. An evening out with your spouse doesn't have to go perfectly for the two of you to fully enjoy each other's company.

Your inner perfectionist is a tyrant that adds little value to your life. Or as the acclaimed novelist Anne Lamott once said, "perfectionism is the voice of the oppressor." Quiet that voice and you'll be less inclined to procrastinate.

A Feeling of Overwhelm

There's no shame in feeling overwhelmed. It happens to all of us. Our obligations and responsibilities accumulate to the point that we feel buried underneath them. Anxiety sets in, paralyzing us and preventing us from taking action.

Many circumstances can lead to a general sense of overwhelm. The most common example is that of the harried individual juggling multiple projects. The demands of each eventually cause him or her to feel as if they're facing an insurmountable mountain.

But that's just the most common scenario. In truth, the feeling of overwhelm can stem from many situations.

For example, relationship problems between you and your spouse can trigger anxiety that paralyzes you into inaction. Massive credit card balances can have the same effect. The death of a close family member can make everything else seem doubly stressful and oppressive. Major life decisions, such as buying a new house, can dramatically elevate your stress level, opening the door to a host of negative emotions.

Information overload can also make us feel overwhelmed. While researching something, we're inundated with so much information that it's difficult to move forward. We become incapacitated with indecision.

Whatever the cause, feeling overwhelmed increases the likelihood that we'll put off work, oftentimes important work. The sense of being buried paralyzes us, making it difficult to act - at least until this feeling, along with the negative emotions it spurs, dissipates.

How to Overcome A Feeling of Overwhelm?

If you're feeling overwhelmed, and that feeling is causing you to

put things off, take a step back and figure out the reason (or reasons). Why are you feeling this way? What precisely is causing you to feel overwhelmed? Only then can you create a plan for tackling the triggers and resolving the feelings that are holding you back.

For example, suppose you're feeling overwhelmed because you're not getting enough sleep. Your nerves are frayed, you're irritable, and minor annoyances are magnified. In this case, insufficient sleep is the trigger. You'd need to come up with a plan for getting the sleep your mind needs to perform effectively.

Suppose you're feeling stressed because you're juggling multiple projects. Fragmented focus is the trigger. Here, it's helpful to break down each project into its constituent tasks. Then, address each task one by one.

Suppose you're feeling overwhelmed because a loved one has died. In this case, therapy might prove invaluable.

If credit card bills are causing you to feel anxious and trapped, it's imperative that you come up with a reasonable plan for paying them off.

There's no one-size-fits-all solution for dealing with a feeling of overwhelm. The most effective method for controlling this feeling is to identify its root cause and address it at its source.

Laziness

Many people think laziness and procrastination are so closely entwined that they're essentially the same thing.

Let's unpack this concept with a couple of definitions:

The procrastinator realizes that the task in question must eventually be addressed. He or she simply puts it off until a later time.

A good example is studying for an exam. The procrastinating student knows that he or she must eventually sit down and study for it. The exam isn't going to go away.

The lazy student doesn't just put off studying. He or she avoids it entirely. There's no intention of addressing the task in question - neither in the present nor down the road. It entails effort, which the lazy person finds objectionable.

Let's say you struggle with laziness, and habitually put tasks off

until the last possible moment. Or worse, you put them off indefinitely. You know you should address important items that appear on your to-do list, but would rather sit on the couch and watch TV.

How can you break this habit?

How to Overcome Laziness

First, identify the reasons you tend to be lazy. Some people are lazy because they harbor a low self-image. Others are so because they have absolutely no interest in the task at hand. Still others use laziness as a coping mechanism when they're faced with a task, they find disagreeable.

Although laziness is considered by many to be a natural character trait, there's usually a root cause that triggers the behavior. The key, as always, is to identify that trigger.

Second, identify obstacles you believe are preventing you from taking action. Ask yourself whether these obstacles are truly impossible to overcome. When you scrutinize them, you may find they're little more than mirages. They either don't exist, or they're far less impactful than you imagine. They may even be invented as a way to rationalize behavior.

For example, suppose you're trying to motivate yourself to go for a jog. A possible "obstacle" might be that you don't know where you left your running shoes. But this isn't likely to be a true obstacle. After all, there are only so many places your running shoes could be located in your home. In this example, the "obstacle" has been invented to rationalize laziness.

Third, get into the habit of taking action. Most people who struggle with laziness believe the issue stems from a lack of motivation. In truth, motivation is fleeting for everyone. What separates the action taker from the excuse maker is the habit of acting.

The good news is that this habit, like all habits, can be learned. The key ingredients are time and consistent application.

Chapter 45. Overthinking

Most people, at some point in life, have found themselves engaging in too much thinking about a particular thing or situation. Overthinking is reviewing experiences, replaying them repeatedly, and, more often than not, dwelling on thoughts and things that have happened or are about to happen. Overthinking is irritating to the mind and can result in serious consequences to an individual's life.

Incessant worrying is overthinking about what could happen. When overthinking starts to affect the mental and emotional part of an individual, then he or she needs to consider getting professional assistance.

Dwelling on thoughts that are not going away will generally affect the well-being of an individual, his or her normal functioning in life, and result in the development of several illnesses. Mental illnesses such as anxiety disorders, panic disorders, trauma, phobias, and bipolar disorders, among others, can cause one to have no control over the rushing thoughts in their minds. Some experiences in life can also lead to overthinking.

Factors That Influence Overthinking

- Regrets

Regretting a word or wrong action leads to such an individual replaying the scenario repeatedly. The victim can overthink about diverse outcomes of such a scenario. When people make mistakes, it is obvious that they feel bad about them, but it is equally important to know that no one can change the past. So, knowing how to shake off the past is important in ensuring that one remains with a sound mind even after a mistake.

- Pressure for performance probably at work

Everyone wants to leave an excellent impression. However, working towards that excellence has nothing to do with a collection of overloaded thoughts. The anxiety of whether one will measure up to the quality standard will only create an unhealthy mind that will be incapable of working towards excellence. When there is the desire to perform, a relaxed mind is the best platform that can absorb new methods, techniques, and information to adapt to for

excellence.

- The fear of the unknown

Some people are just too creative and can imagine non-existing disasters. The fear that something bad might happen can only be fought through conquering such thoughts with other positive thoughts. Fear can affect the thinking of a victim and place them in a difficult situation of overthinking. When such victims detect such thoughts as they set in, they should discard them to help to save their mind from overthinking.

- Obsessive thoughts

Whatever the subject of the thoughts, obsessive thinking can lead to overthinking. This can subsequently lead to an unhealthy state of mind. Obsessive thinking can be because of waiting for an interview, a date or a performance. A victim can be caught up in too much thinking about what to say, do or how things will turn out. Thinking too much about such things during such scenarios has negative results. The mind is always overloaded and performs poorly. Obsessive thinking can result in a serious disorder known as obsessive-compulsive disorder.

- Fear of worse scenarios

Fear of worst scenarios such as illness can cause overthinking to individuals. When one has health problems, for example, the fear of the worst is likely to come to mind from time to time. When this becomes a constant fear in the mind of the victim, then overthinking sets in. However, this can be avoided by putting necessary measures in place. Learning to avoid such thoughts can also save the health of the person from deteriorating due to the impact of overthinking.

- Dwelling on the ‘what if’ element

The ‘what if’ element is like the mind of a film director who tests the outcome of one episode in several ways. This could be so much of a situation that was or is beyond the thinker’s ability to influence. Getting into overthinking in this state is only a waste of time. Rechanneling these thoughts into issues that the thinker can influence is much more positive. The ‘what if’ element is a state that distresses the mind through different evaluations.

What Is Overthinking Disorder?

Medically speaking, there is no such term as an overthinking disorder. However, overthinking affects the quality of life of victims in many ways. As a result, overthinking becomes a subject for consideration. Overthinking affects the mental and emotional capacity of a person.

Overthinking is normally associated with psychological issues such as anxiety and depression. Health professionals claim that overthinking will usually result in mental issues, since it drives human instincts to a pool of unconstructive thoughts, and creates issues that are non-existent.

It is clear that human beings cannot change whatever occurred in the past or what could happen in the future. Therefore, it is important for people to learn the art of controlling thoughts as well as emotions. Overthinking can be a disorder if an individual keeps on overthinking too much because it stresses them.

Individuals with panic disorder always undergo negative thinking, with most having self-defeating beliefs. This is often the case when one is experiencing panic attacks when their inner voice amplifies their fears as well as anxiety. For instance, when panic takes hold, one might believe they could stop breathing or become crazy. This causes a victim to experience irrational thoughts such as anxiety disorders.

Individuals experiencing panic disorder imagine the worst that could happen in their future. For instance, individuals afraid of flying in a plane might think about the turbulence and feel afraid. They also experience agoraphobia, and this may prevent them from leaving their homes. The main issue with forecasting is that it feeds the victim with anxiety causing them to feel extremely afraid.

Anxiety, as well as panic, results in self-defeat. Self-defeat makes people lose focus and consider their weaknesses and failures rather than solutions. People experiencing self-defeat feel overwhelmed as well as full of panic throughout their lives. These destructive thoughts add to their feelings of helplessness and make panic disorder seem even more overwhelming.

How to Identify the Impact of Overthinking in People's lives

- Dwelling on past misfortunes and being unable to move on.

While one is expected to wake up daily and meet the new day with

expectation and enthusiasm, others are stuck in the past. This completely affects their social life. Probably the past was full of pain or loss, and holding onto these memories makes these people bitter and unable to trust. Both their social life and work are affected since the two require the engagement of the brain and the emotions.

- Worrying over inability until one believes they are incapable.

When individuals are affected by overthinking, they cannot be productive enough. This results in emotional torture and can easily convince them that they are useless compared to other individuals. However, their potential is stolen by overthinking, and this becomes a root problem if not resolved. If necessary, measures are not taken, these people will not be able to improve in the areas affected.

- Developing low self-esteem due to comparing self with others

The inability to do what others seem to do easily brings on low self-esteem. This is due to the thought that others are better than you and that you will never measure up to them. The truth, however, is that the ability has been swallowed up by overthinking, which has affected the power of productivity. Low self-esteem has a serious effect on individual lives since one cannot consider him or herself productive.

- Inability to control these thoughts and emotions

A normal person will easily discard negative thoughts when they seem to storm their minds. However, when overthinking becomes a mental problem or is because of another illness controlling the thoughts, the emotions are almost impossible. At this level, CBT (cognitive behavior therapy) is advisable. CBT involves helping the patient change their negative thoughts into positive thoughts.

Effects of Overthinking

Overthinking can lead to emotional pain, trauma, and guilt because most of this thinking is usually about things in the past. For instance, one would be worrying about a particular incident and the reason it actually occurred, despite having no way of changing it. Most of these questions that run through their minds are without answers. These are questions with dead-ends and do not require answers.

Overthinkers create situations in their minds that do not exist. This creates a feeling of helplessness with reality because they cannot manage the situation. Individuals spend most of their time thinking desperately about an issue that they cannot solve. This creates fear when they over-analyze the situation in different ways, preventing them from taking necessary actions.

A victim in this kind of situation lacks the opportunity to run away from health problems due to overthinking. Statistics show that a number of victims of overthinking abuse alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana, among other drugs. This causes serious effects on an individual's life for a long period. Overthinking troubles the mind and can result in insanity when the matter is not taken seriously.

Anxiety and depression are the effects of overthinking. The impending disaster that is formed in the mind of overthinkers can result in Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), depression as well as panic attacks. Because of over-analyzing, and considering every situation from different angles that can go wrong or about to go wrong, the victim ends up eyeing every individual or particular situation as a threat.

Most overthinkers consider taking other alternatives in order to escape depression or fear by taking refuge in an unhealthy lifestyle that results in more worry in prospect. The abuse of alcohol and deadly drugs worsens the situation. Some people with excellent brains have ruined their lives because of abuse of substances due to overthinking.

Over the years, people have thought that those who overthink issues make better decisions that make them happy. However, that is not the case since these people impair their decision-making capability. Overthinkers hinder their rational thoughts and destroy their ability to solve resulting in the negativity that makes an individual unhappy.

Overthinking makes individuals lose their ability to focus and end up being pessimists. When overthinkers mull over an issue within their mind repeatedly, it becomes difficult for them to nod off, have a peaceful sleep, as well as live alone. Instead, they dwell in pondering one thing, which leads to another. Their mind visualizes past events, which results in a re-experiencing the pain they suffered.

Health professionals argue that it is not possible to interpret the thoughts of overthinkers. Victims can overthink about an issue until the small hours of the morning when sheer tiredness overtakes them until they find sleep. This pattern is constant and continues night after night resulting in physical and mental disorders that have a relationship with chronic insomnia.

Effects That Show in the Life of a Person Suffering from Overthinking

1. A problem in making decisions

Overthinkers have issues when it comes to making decisions. The mind cannot generate exactly what to do about the situation. In many cases, individuals hardly consider what the solution to the problem could be. For instance, a simple act of choosing a dress for dinner dates can be such a hustle for someone suffering from overthinking. Settling for a choice proves to be so difficult.

1. Ignoring instincts

Overthinkers are always extra careful. They tend to want to know the advantages and disadvantages of every choice they make. By doing this, they even ignore their own inner voice. In addition, they even forget about their schedule and their purpose in life because they normally experience pain and too much reasoning without answers.

1. Constant rumination

This is playing or reviewing scenarios or conversations repeatedly, thinking of what one could have said or done differently. Pondering over different issues without getting a suitable solution influences people to have multiple thoughts. Such victims hardly pay attention to what they are supposed to be doing because they spend all their time focusing on other problems.

1. Evading choice making

Since this exercise proves to be such a hustle to an overthinker, evading the choice making is simply easier for them. Overthinking is a disorder that victims can hardly mitigate without assistance. Overthinkers can hardly make choices on their own because their thoughts are trapped by specific worries, which they can hardly get off their minds.

1. Missing deadlines

The mind of overthinkers wants to do nothing but dwell on the thoughts it has subjected to its captivity. Having to respect deadlines just adds extra pressure to such a mind. The desire to find a solution is the greatest challenge to overthinkers. Instead, most overthinkers fail to meet their deadlines since they cannot help the situation they are experiencing.

1. Repeating the same conversations

Again, an overthinking mind has a particular thought of pattern with its content limited to what it constantly ruminates on. This is what causes the person to keep repeating the same things even without noticing. In most cases, overthinkers speak about the things that affected them consistently after a short period. At this point, repeating similar conversations demonstrates their level of stress.

1. Unnecessary complexity

Unnecessary complexity involves going through too much information in order to try to make the right decision. This goes in hand with the inability to make a choice. The person thinks that for them to make the right choice, they need to have the information readily available. Similar to a worn-out computer, the human brain can hardly process the right information to solve a problem.

1. Emotional dryness

Emotions are the areas that overthinking affects. When this person is in the company of others, they tend not to engage their emotions at all. In most cases, victims of overthinking tend to exclude themselves from others because their emotions are drawn by their thoughts. Overthinkers will act differently than their normal selves because of the turmoil running through their minds.

1. Disturbed sleep

The mind keeps constantly thinking and never shuts down even at night. This causes the person to keep turning in bed all night. This is mainly associated with chronic insomnia where the overthinker's mind stays active all night. Sleepless nights overwork the brain and at times kill the brain cells.

1. Being held back by anxiety

Since anxiety is the only relatable emotion in this person's life, it can make the person obey the fears and end up not making important choices or taking important steps. Health professionals argue that overthinkers are uneasy all the time because of the hormones triggered by the brain. A chemical in the brain known as glutamate becomes neurotoxin, which creates holes in the brain cell wall, which makes the victims uneasy.

Types of Overthinking

• Abstraction

This is reasoning that is beyond achievement in reality. To try to appease the storming thoughts of regrets or situations beyond capable influence, overthinkers may end up thinking of actions beyond reality. Overthinkers are influenced to look at an issue in general instead of particular terms. In this case, the decision-making process becomes an issue for the victim.

• Complexity

An overthinker, as the name suggests, can go through the information over and over in order to reach a decision. This makes them consider too many factors without weighing their importance. Overthinkers are not in a position to find a solution to general problems that face them. Too much reasoning to understand or come up with a better solution always affects their decisions.

- Avoidance

Overthinkers try to avoid something they need to do by excusing themselves. Trying to avoid an issue that causes them to think becomes a difficult task for the victims. For instance, if the issue is a break-up, victims will avoid visiting familiar places in order to remove the memories from their minds.

- Cold logic

Since the emotions of an overthinker are dry and gone, their decisions are based on facts or logic, even where the emotion is the detector of the decision to be made. Overthinkers prefer to reason out an answer instead of letting emotion override them to forget the issue naturally.

- Intuition neglect

Intuition is the main source of affirmation, and overthinkers can tend to ignore their intuitions even when they know the truth. Victims tend to ignore reality by wondering or trying to ask themselves questions or trying to find out the issue and the reason it had to occur. Victims remain suspicious the whole time because they choose not to understand what they already know by overthinking.

- Creating problems

Overthinkers can be generally complex; they are capable of seeing problems where they do not exist. This can be placing blame on others rather than considering their mistakes. In addition, overthinkers cause other issues in order to attract the attention of others. They do this without any purpose because they have no one to understand them.

- Premature decisions

This is simply thinking of a decision whose scenario is not yet on the scene. There are several cases where people have died or committed suicide because of overthinking. This mainly occurs because of feeling neglected or lost in a different world. Most overthinkers make premature decisions, especially when they lack proper guidance.

- Irrelevant decisions

This is making decisions based on the likelihood of future scenarios. Many factors follow people who overthink. The victims make

irrelevant decisions because they are not in the right state of mind. As a result, whatever decision they make fails to offer any necessary solution.

The Dangers of Overthinking

Overthinking about matters can take a serious toll on the health of an individual. Scientific research demonstrates that dwellings on shortcomings and problems as well as mistakes can increase the risk of mental health decline. When mental health declines, the habit of ruminating increases and results in a vicious cycle that is very difficult to break. Victims hardly fight their thoughts because they can hardly find effective solutions to their problems.

What Science Says Happens When You Overthink?

- Increases chances of mental infirmity

Scientists have discovered that overthinkers who dwell so much on their shortcomings, issues, and mistakes are at risk of suffering from mental illness. According to scientists, rumination or too much thinking can trigger a vicious cycle that is difficult to break. Based on scientific evidence, more people affected by overthinking have demonstrated signs of mental problems in recent years.

- Interferes with problem-solving

Scientific research demonstrates that overthinkers suppose that they are helping themselves by revising their issues in their minds. However, studies demonstrate that an individual can suffer from analysis paralysis. Overanalyzing each and everything can interfere with problem-solving. It causes people to dwell on issues rather than consider solutions.

- It Agitates Sleep

Overthinkers hardly sleep when their mind won't rest. Scientific studies demonstrate that rumination as well as worry results in fewer hours of sleep. Individuals who overthink mostly toss and turn in bed for hours before the final sleep. Scientists have discovered that sleeping late will not solve anything since overthinking impairs the quality of sleep.

- Disconnection from the inner voice

Overthinking causes individuals to remain stuck in their occupation. The inner voice tells the victim to reason hard about things that are miles away. Scientists have proved that the state of overthinking

prevents people from working out. A victim at this state can hardly take action on the matter at hand.

- Overwhelming

Victims suffering from the condition of overthinking get overwhelmed faster. Their heart-pounding, paralyzed fear or exhaustion from sleepless nights mainly demonstrates this. Overthinkers will do anything in order to have some reprieve from this state. Some will try medication, while others might even consider a serious alternative, such as suicide.

How to Change Your Thinking

Destructive thoughts present in an overthinker's mind contribute to serious disorders. Thinking patterns are a serious matter that should be carefully examined by physiologists. Individuals experiencing the impact of overthinking should consider assistance from medical experts to prevent disorders. It is important to forget things that could harm the mind at all costs.

People about to experience depression or anxiety should consider exercise or a lot of reading since this would make them forget about the issue at hand. In addition, people ought to consider practices like yoga because they assist in meditation and relaxation of the mind. Scientists argue that writing down constructive statements can help in eliminating thoughts that can distort the brain.

- **Awareness is the Beginning of Transformation**

Before individuals start to address or cope with a person's habit of overthinking, it is very important to take into consideration when the person started thinking and what are the causes and effects on his or her life. Scientists counsel such individuals to step back and review the situation and their response. The moment of awareness is vital because it is the seed of transformation required.

- **Stop Thinking about the Wrong**

In most cases, overthinking is the result of a single emotion, such as fear or panic. This mainly happens because the victim is focusing too much on negative things that might occur. Scientists counsel people to consider reading in order to stop thinking in a particular direction. It is important for people to visualize the right things as well as keep the thoughts present and upfront.

- **Considering Happiness Rather than Stress**

Doctors recommend that people choose happiness as a healthy as well as positive alternative to sinking into stress and depression. Factors such as meditation, exercise, learning an instrument, drawing, or painting can distance one from the problems that shut down the mind.

- **Putting Things into Perspective**

It is always easy for people to make things bigger as well as more negative than they are. People ought to think about how they look at their matters in the coming years. Scientists recommend people

to consider changing up to the period that would assist them in avoiding overthinking.

- Changing the View of Fear

Failures of past events influence fear because people dwell on them and try to overgeneralize these failures. It is important for people to face their fears with courage in order to avoid overthinking and to remember every opportunity as a new beginning or as a place to start again.

- Set Short Time-Limits for Decisions

Scientists consider that time limits are important for making decisions. Overthinkers can become better decision-makers by setting deadlines in their life no matter the decision. It is important for one to set an appropriate time in order to prevent them from negative thinking. Short-time limits enable individuals to find considerable solutions.

- Maximizing Daily Inputs

Extreme information is unnecessary since it distorts the brain in different ways. Individuals are advised to think about what they do on a daily basis in order to fulfill their schedule. Maximizing the daily inputs keeps one away from too much thinking. This enables people to forget about their issues. Overthinkers should start taking necessary actions consistently. This will make them procrastinate less by overthinking.

Chapter 46. Mental Toughness

Mental toughness is the ability to transform promise into actual performance. It is about taking control of your life for making the most of it. It is about understanding that you are the only one that's responsible for your success and no one else can stop you from succeeding. Mental toughness is essential in every aspect of your personal and professional life.

Are there times when a specific situation triggered a negative emotion that hindered your progress? Well, this could be something as simple as a spat with your spouse before heading out to work. When something like this happens, do you feel overwhelmed by the negative emotion and does it take a toll on your productivity and efficiency? If that's the case, then you should learn to let go of all that, and this book will help you with this process!

There are many theories about the true nature of mental toughness, ranging from the ability to withstand pressure to the capacity to overcome self-doubt. While these are valid aspects, the true essence of mental toughness can best be understood by breaking it down to two main elements. The first element is the ability to endure and overcome negativity. This is the aspect that allows you to rise above such things as self-doubt, fear of failure and even procrastination. By developing the strength of mind to resist and overcome such negative thoughts and emotions, you will greatly increase your chances of success in every area of life.

The second element of mental toughness is the ability to embrace and utilize all the resources at your disposal. This includes input and ideas from other people, opportunities that arise unexpectedly and even delays that could be seen as negative by the less mentally strong. While resisting and overcoming negativity is a large part of success, being able to make the most of everything at your disposal is equally vital. Therefore, mental toughness is the strength of mind that not only overcomes the obstacles on your path to success, but also embraces and puts to use every potential tool and benefit that you encounter while pursuing your goals.

How Mental Toughness Can Help You to Achieve Your Long-Term Goals

Any goal that is worth pursuing will require a great deal of time and effort to accomplish. Unfortunately, most people are accustomed to instant gratification, resulting in them abandoning projects that don't produce meaningful and satisfying results in a short period of time. Mental toughness will help you to develop a sense of stamina when it comes to pursuing your goals and chasing your dreams. This will enable you to stay the course for as long as it takes to achieve your desired outcome. Therefore, you will be able to keep going long past the point that most people give up due to a lack of immediate results.

The fact is that the longer the journey to accomplishing a goal, the more failures and setbacks you are likely to face. This is another reason why so few people are capable of fulfilling long term goals and dreams. Fortunately, when you develop mental toughness you nurture the ability to rise above the failures and setbacks you encounter.

One reason for this is that you understand that any failure is merely a bump in the road, it isn't the end of the journey. Therefore, you know that once you overcome that failure you can return to the path that will eventually lead to your success. The other reason is that a mentally tough person uses failures and setbacks as learning opportunities. Rather than feeling defeated, you learn the lessons that are available, thus becoming better and stronger as a result of every failure you face. Subsequently, the longer the journey to achieving your goals, the better and stronger you become. This is one of the most critical aspects of mental toughness.

Benefits of Mental Toughness in Business

Running a business can be a highly rewarding experience, however it can also be one of the most challenging experiences imaginable. There are an infinite number of things that can go wrong at any point in time, meaning that security is more fiction than reality. This is where mental toughness can make all the difference. When a person is mentally weak any and every challenge that arises can undermine their sense of confidence and commitment, causing them to become victims rather than victors. However, when you are mentally tough, you endure the challenges you face, acquiring the insights and experiences that such challenges provide. In the end, rather than fearing such challenges and unexpected events you actually invite them, recognizing their value in developing your mental toughness.

In addition to events that can prove challenging, every business has its fair share of people who are challenging. These people can be bosses, coworkers, subordinates or people outside your organization. Those who are mentally weak will allow negative people to have a detrimental impact on their business, creating all sorts of headaches and problems that only get worse with time. However, when you are mentally tough you are able to effectively manage the people you come into contact with. This means that you can diffuse volatile situations before they get out of hand, set higher standards in order to effectively overcome negativity and even bring out the best in people by being an example through your words and actions. Again, the difference is that mentally weak people will become the victims of negative people, whereas mentally tough people become the victors.

The Benefits of Mental Toughness in Times of Hardship

There is perhaps no area in life where mental toughness is more valuable than that of hardship. Whether the hardship is the loss of a job, the loss of a loved one, or some natural disaster that sees a person's home destroyed, it can have devastating effects on anyone who doesn't possess the qualities of mental toughness.

When a person is mentally weak, they will allow such times of hardship to dictate the course of their lives. In the event that their home is destroyed, they will see that as the end of their way of life,

becoming a sad shadow of the person they once were. Additionally, in the event of losing a loved one a mentally weak person will succumb to the depression and anxiety that such an event can cause. Needless to say, it is perfectly human to be devastated when you lose someone you love. However, that isn't to say that your life has to come to an end as well.

In contrast, someone who is mentally strong will rise above the hardship and sorrow and forge ahead, writing a new chapter in their lives. They will see the destruction of their home as a chance to start fresh, to find another place to live and begin a new life. In the case of losing a loved one, they will take the time to mourn the loss, fully expressing their grief and sorrow. However, they will then begin to live their life again in a way that would please the loved one they lost and that will benefit all others impacted by the loss.

In the end, that is one of the most significant factors separating the mentally tough from the mentally weak in times of hardship. Not only do the mentally tough seek to rise above hardship and restore meaning and success to their lives, they also strive to restore meaning and success to the lives of others equally affected by events. This is most true in the case of a parent who has to raise children single handedly after the loss of their spouse. It's no good for the children if that parent allows the loss to destroy their ability to live. Fortunately, a mentally tough person will find the strength to carry on, thereby providing a loving and happy life to their children who deserve the best after suffering such sorrow and loss. Therefore, the true mark of a mentally tough person is their ability to bring success not just to their own lives, but to the lives of those they touch as well.

Chapter 47. Self-Discipline

Self-discipline is exactly what it says - the ability to discipline oneself. It is the ability to know what to do in situations and the fortitude to actually do what is correct in the situation. It is a habit that is vital to daily success. Truly successful people are usually highly disciplined people.

No one is born with the ability to truly self-discipline. Babies only care about being taken care of and having their needs met. As children grow older, their parents are in charge of their discipline—at least in the beginning. Parents make the rules, and children follow them because small children lack the thought processes needed to make good decisions on a regular basis. Small children only see the here-and-now, the immediate gratification. They do not know and do not care that a bigger, better reward might be in store for them if they wait patiently. They lack foresight. As children grow older, they begin to see the reasoning behind their parent's rules. They begin to make choices that mirror the choices their parents have made for them in the past. They show that they are learning to discipline themselves. At this point, the parents may begin to step back a little and to loosen the reins. They may allow the child a bit more freedom in making decisions, with the understanding that the parent is available if the choice turns out to be unfavorable. In this way, the child learns in the safety of the home and with the protection of the parents to make good choices and formulate good decisions. The child learns to self-discipline.

In a perfect world, this is the way children would be raised. Unfortunately, this is the real world and not a perfect one. The problem is not that parents do not care about their children—it is that many parents do not know how to teach the art of self-discipline to their children. Maybe the parents are not self-disciplined, maybe the parents feel the child will learn it eventually, or maybe the parents simply do not want to let go complete control over the child. For whatever reason, most children are not taught self-discipline as a way of life and reach adulthood with no clue of how to be in charge of themselves.

However, the good news is that self-discipline can be learned. While best learned while growing up, as a part of learning to be an adult,

it is possible to learn as an adult and begin to practice self-discipline skills immediately. Moreover, by learning self-discipline in adulthood, the person has a total by-in to the idea. This is a personal choice. This is something that needs to be done in order to enjoy a better life. This does not mean that learning self-discipline as an adult will be easier or faster, but at least, the adult who makes the conscious choice to become more self-disciplined has a personal stake in its success.

Self-discipline is nothing more than managing one's own personal affairs. It is a way of behaving where people automatically choose to do what should be done, as opposed to what would more preferably be done. It is studying for a test instead of going to a party. It is washing dirty laundry on a regular basis so that clean clothes are always available. It is following a budget so that future financial goals can be realized.

Granted impulse is much more fun than discipline. Impulse gives the opportunity to have fun and be with friends. Impulse means staying up late and sleeping in tomorrow. Impulse means spending the extra money on the desirable frivolous toy and not saving anything this week. But impulse will not finish homework, wash clothes, follow a schedule, or save money. Self-discipline is needed for those things. Does this mean that impulse has no place in a life ruled by self-discipline? Absolutely not! Impulsive action is an almost automatic action. A cake is meant to be eaten. Self-discipline should never be so rigid that people go through life acting like little robots with no feelings and no desires. Everyone wants a cake. Having self-discipline just means eating one slice of cake and not the whole cake.

Practicing self-discipline requires great self-knowledge. Think about that for a minute. How can anything be changed if all the facts are not known? Imagine walking into a kitchen and seeing a small child and a puddle of water. The first instinct would be to believe the child spilled something. But what if someone else spilled something and then left the puddle on the floor? What if the pipe under the sink is leaking? Without knowing all the facts there is no way to come to the correct conclusion. The path to self-discipline begins with knowing, and admitting the existence of, personal weaknesses. Everyone has those things they would rather not do. People would rather not admit to being imperfect, but all are and must be

prepared to admit to imperfections to be able to begin the journey to self-discipline. The next step is to be prepared to move everyday temptations out of the way. This is usually easier said than done, but it must be done to properly begin along the path toward self-discipline. Once ready to begin, make sure to set clear, realistic goal and make a plan to achieve them. Do not be afraid to set several smaller goals as opposed to one large ultimate goal. Nothing worthwhile is ever reached in one straight path. There will be roadblocks and pitfalls along the way that will necessitate reworking the plan. So, it may be better to start with smaller goals that will give a sense of accomplishment that will help ease travelling this path.

Keep the plan simple. Self-discipline does not need to be complicated. The idea of self-discipline itself is actually a very simple concept. The plan to get to self-discipline should not be overly complicated. The plan to reach self-discipline should be as simple as possible while encompassing all aspects needed to reach the goal. A complicated plan may be impossible to achieve and will probably lead to defeat—and giving up is not an option on the road to self-discipline.

Self-discipline is a powerful tool to possess. Self-discipline is a positive force in life. It does not mean giving up those things that make life satisfying; but rather using innate strength and creativity to achieve desired goals. With self-discipline, life is more enjoyable, and the little cheats that help make life enjoyable when people have the self-discipline to learn to enjoy these little cheats only occasionally. Again, it is not necessary to completely give up cake; just do not eat the whole thing!

Self-disciplined people do not deprive themselves, but they use focus to stay on track when goals conflict with one another. Let us imagine that friends want to have fun tonight with a pub crawl. Let us also imagine there is a huge chemistry test tomorrow. The self-disciplined person would stay home and study chemistry, thus giving better odds to getting a good grade and not worrying about the risk of oversleeping and missing the test altogether. The bars will still be there another time.

People who have a high level of self-discipline are more satisfied with themselves and how their life is going. Self-discipline allows for a better sense of self and a higher level of self-esteem. Life is not

out of control. Life has meaning beyond today. Worthwhile goals are in sight in the future—and this works in a cycle. Creating goals and making a plan to achieve them leads to a higher sense of self-control. A higher sense of self control leads to more goal setting and plan making. The cycle just keeps going around.

Self-disciplined people are proactive, not reactive. This means they anticipate problems and work to prevent them, rather than trying to solve a problem when it occurs. Proactive people spend time every day wondering ‘what if?’. What if the car does not start tomorrow? What if the washing machine breaks down? What if the tree in the backyard falls into the house? Proactive people imagine scenarios and decide on a plan of action before it is needed. If the plan is never needed then at least there is a plan in place. Reactive people, on the other hand, spend a lot of time doing things that are not producing a future goal. Reactive people react when the problem occurs. They have no preset plan in place. If the car does not start one morning then they scramble to find an alternate means of transportation for the day. The proactive person might give up eating lunch out every day in favor of brown-bagging lunch then saving that money for a down payment on a house. That is self-discipline. The reactive person will suddenly start scrambling trying to dig up down payment money for a house when the monthly rent increases yet again.

While missing restaurant lunches in order to save money for that future house might seem negative at the moment, it is positive in the long run. With a bit of sacrificing a future goal is achieved. Focusing on daily choices makes living more at the moment than looking toward the future. So, while planning a daily brown-bag lunch might seem like an in-the-moment choice, it is really a part of a long-term goal. Deciding on a different restaurant each day is truly in the moment—and when the goal is achieved, a tremendous sense of satisfaction replaces any feelings of deprivation that may have been lingering.

Boundaries are not scary things, but rather necessary limits to achieving a future goal. Boundaries are needed to achieve the level of self-control needed to become fully self-disciplined. Setting boundaries requires knowing exactly what the future goals are and how to follow a path to achieve them. This allows the self-disciplined person to understand themselves better than most

people, to be much more comfortable in their own skin than most people. This also allows the self-disciplined person to know exactly what lengths they are capable of achieving in order to reach a goal.

Moreover, becoming self-disciplined will showcase who is a friend and who is not. True friends will assist in achieving goals. True friends will not try to block the hard work needed to become self-disciplined. By making the conscious decision to become self-disciplined, the sad truth of reality means that not everyone can stay around. But the self-disciplined person has the power to create the world as they want it to be.

Self-discipline takes an extreme amount of energy to achieve. It is not just choosing to be self-disciplined—it must be constantly worked at, and that takes energy. This will require good lifestyle practices. Eat healthily, sleep regularly, exercise when possible—all these activities will energize the body and mind and make working toward the goal of self-discipline more easily attainable.

Chapter 48. Boost Productivity

Procrastination is a never-ending battle to getting to work on the things that matter to you most. Trying to stop you are the endless distractions we encounter in our modern world coupled with whatever obligations you may have. But it doesn't have to be a war of attrition. Defeating procrastination is a series of smaller battles that you must win whenever they present themselves. The war is won with consistency rather than upfront might. Procrastination can be a scary thing. At its worst, procrastination becomes an addiction, closely followed by grief and a host of mental health issues associated with not getting the most out of life.

There are many strategies to help you win these individual battles. Strategies that you will add to a well-stocked arsenal that can be consulted whenever you need that extra push. But a strategy can only take you so far. It is up to you to identify when it can be used and when actually to implement it. Nobody else can push the button, so to speak. Beating procrastination can be summed up as two actions: identifying the conditions that cause procrastination and coming up with a strategy to address those conditions. This can mean turning off your phone during work hours eliminating other sources of automatic behavior. If you have known trigger points, then put as much distance between them as possible. It can also mean modifying your behavior so that you stop chasing activities that give you instant gratification.

With practice, this comes easy. Altering your behavior to seek delayed gratification activities is possible for most people. We already know how to do this to some degree. We go to work because it allows us to live and eat. Work is a type of delayed gratification activity because you only get paid weekly or biweekly. We also tend to eat dessert after the main course rather than eating it first or all the time. Delayed gratification is easy to understand in these terms, but it becomes lost when we apply it to our free time. We assume that because we aren't working or doing something out of obligation that we can do whatever we want. In a way, yes, we can do whatever we want on our time off but should we? Why sit around and do nothing when we could be learning a new skill, starting a business or simply working on a hobby?

Relaxation is important, of course, but it does come at a price. Too much relaxation is more akin to saying procrastination. The strategies in this chapter are general enough that you can apply them to most instances of productivity. They will help you prime your work ethic and get the most out of your time off.

Smooth Transitions in Between Tasks*

After finishing one task, we naturally tend towards a short period of ease before turning to the next. Social media and other easy to digest sources of information become go to activities after finishing some chore. It is also common to eat something or to do a relaxing activity that lets you “unwind”. Transitions in between tasks are dangerous to the procrastinator because "short" breaks have no predefined limit. You sit down at the couch and fire up your game console saying you will play one game. Then you die early, and of course, it didn't count! You play another game or two to make up for it. You go into a state of limbo where you know that you have to do something but having just finished something you convince yourself that you deserve a break. And you probably do deserve a break. Studying, for example, is best performed in small chunks of "spaced" repetition. But who is keeping time during these instances of respite? Relaxation is a time-independent activity. Given the opportunity, somebody could relax all day and never grow tired of it.

This is a trend that many procrastinators know all too well. It is fueled by poor regulation of transitioning in between tasks. Some are able to convince themselves that every task has been finished and so they can relax for the rest of the day. Others still have no such pending tasks and can dedicate their entire day to doing nothing essentially. After one form of entertainment is exhausted, they turn to the next, until it is time to go to bed. They become trapped in a cycle of instant gratification seeking. First, it's a video game followed by lunch and YouTube. In the evening, they decide to catch up with Netflix while they order take out. After that, they log in to their favorite social media site to see what everyone else is up to. Their shallow glimpse into the lives of others may trigger a depression response, which in turn fuels more negative behaviors like drug and alcohol abuse. A grim picture to be sure but one that many people out there live on a daily basis.

Being mindful of the things you do in between tasks is key to

avoiding the bottomless pit of instant gratification activities. Make sure you have tasks to complete in the first place. Prioritize them the way your parents used to tell you to do homework first and play outside only after you finished. Then when it is time to switch into the next thing don't let your mind wander in pleasure seeking mode. Appreciate a better understanding of time and how everything you do has a cost. Watching a single 23-minute long episode as a reward for a few Pomodoro's is perfectly okay. But what are the costs of watching an additional episode? Twenty-three minute should be more than enough to recharge your mental batteries to continue what you were doing. Or if you need a change of pace, there is probably some other chore that needs to be done.

With the Pomodoro technique, each short five-minute break and longer 15- to 30-minute breaks are timed. Keeping tabs on your activities can be grueling, but it is preferable to get lost in some meaningless task.

Look Ahead

Sometimes, a smooth transition between tasks requires the necessary foresight to manage them. If you have a good idea about what to expect, then you can mentally prepare yourself for what is to come. Each time you switch from one task to another you are switching from one context to the next. When you are at work, your brain operates from within the work context. You know how to perform your work, and you strive to perform it well. You know which things you need to be on top of and which pitfalls to avoid (which only comes with experience). At lunchtime, you can relax and enjoy a bite to eat. Coworkers often go into town to eat lunch together. You are now in a social context as well as a relaxed one. When you drive home, you enter the driver's context. You are careful to obey the laws of the road as well as keeping an eye open for what other drivers are doing. Finally, you get home, and you are in another context of relaxation.

At any time along the chain of context switching, you can "look ahead" into the day in anticipation of what is to come. You may find yourself anticipating things that otherwise wouldn't be on your radar. A strong visualization cue like imagining yourself in various different contexts helps in achieving this. Before going into work take a mental inventory of what the day will be like. Is there a scheduled meeting or some important deadline that is to be filled?

If work is more routinely, then you can imagine yourself going into business as usual. Then before going home for the day, try to picture what you will do for the rest of the day. Part of this will be taken up with chores, running errands and playing to your responsibilities. But another part of this will involve figuring out what to do with your free time. If you plan what your activities will look like, there will be less trouble transitioning in between tasks. Eating is a given but letting your attention wander after the meal is not. Who among us doesn't eat for pleasure? It translates to doing other pleasurable things during eating, like watching TV. Avoid this.

Planning your free time is important when you have a goal you want to achieve. Finding the hours during the day to work towards that goal begins with "lookaheads." You can easily prepare one or two hours every day using this technique. After a while, this becomes routine, and you will be able to get a consistent hour or two every day without much effort on your part. You can say for example, "Well, after dinner, there isn't anything on my radar. I can use that time to work on my project."

Those with fewer responsibilities should still practice using "lookaheads." Without a clear plan of how the day will go or in what order tasks will be completed is just inviting disaster to happen. Take the day to practice using "lookaheads" in between your task transitions.

Conquer the Day by Conquering the Moment

A day is a series of moments that we take for granted. Instead of paying attention to the way we feel, think and perceive the world we get caught up in the throes of distraction. When was the last time that you had a reflective moment when you were scrolling through a news feed or? Our minds become so engrossed in these activities that we lose focus on what is happening around and within us. Part of this is because doing them puts us under autopilot mode until we get up and do something else. Certain activities exist only to distract us, or to put us in a state of ease. Though good for relaxing after a long day at work, these activities can squander productivity by making us focus on the wrong things. We get caught up in storylines, action-packed gameplay, social media posts, and online memes to the point that nothing else seems to matter when we are in the thick of it.

The engrossing effect of digital technologies is most notable in young children. Many parents substitute quality time with their children by giving them a Wi-Fi connected tablet. The little kids then sit transfixed as they watch their favorite YouTube videos or play with their preferred apps. It's like the rest of the world disappears, and the glowing rectangle in their hands is a portal to a different dimension; adults do this too. When was the last time you were trying to have a conversation with someone who couldn't pry their eyes from their phones? They may have only been pretending to listen to you, but their minds were somewhere else. Then you probably felt that you were walking through a one-sided conversation which is never fun.

The best things in life warrant your full attention. To feel enjoyment in everyday things, we must do it is important to always be in the moment. Digital technologies make this hard for us. Our phones follow us wherever we go, and we spend too much time in front of computer and TV screens. We try to multitask thinking that we can save time, but we lose so much in the process. Multitasking two or more things universally results in poorer results than simply working on the one thing.

Your journey to beat procrastination will be filled with junctures where you need to make a decision between multi-tasking and to have your full-on attention on a task. Multitasking is almost never the answer. The Pomodoro technique was designed with a concentration in mind. Short bursts of sustained intellectual activity allow you to focus in increments without burning out.

Take some time to evaluate how you decide to live in the moment every day. Do you often find yourself multi-tasking? If so, what is your reasoning for it? It is convenient to do more than one thing at a time but lose out on all the benefits from focusing intensely on singular tasks. You should already be practicing single tasking by completing your Pomodoro's. Remember, these Pomodoro's should be done in bursts of high concentration. When working towards your goals, multi-tasking is, in fact, a form of procrastination. You are trying to do everything at once, but you are only slowing down results.

When you get to your work, shut off all forms of external stimuli. Turn your phone off or put it on silent mode. Avoid social media and random internet browsing like the plague. Don't look at your

email until after you have finished a Pomodoro. If you must play music to concentrate, try to find something that is soothing and with minimal lyrical content. Avoid listening to podcasts while you work if you are doing tasks that are mentally challenging.

Rise Like a Champion

In combat sports, there is a saying that you can sometimes spot the winner before the fight is even over. A combatant that controls the fight from the very beginning ensures a high likelihood of victory by doing everything right. His opponent is forced to stay on the defensive; hence he is able to lead the fight with pure momentum. This same momentum that was created at the beginning of the fight allows him to work his opponent with ease. The lesson to be learned here is that success starts early. Don't wait until you are in the "mood" to get work done. Do it as soon as the opportunity presents itself. If you have extra time, don't spend it all pretending to sleep in your bed. A general rule of thumb is that you should be awake as soon as your first alarm goes off. That may give you an extra 30 minutes to put in some work. Like the fighter in a ring, you create momentum from each decision you make throughout the day. Deciding to slack off early, or to put things off until later destroys your momentum to conquer the day.

Remember that each day is a fight against time. Your victory conditions are simply to fulfill the amount of work you set out to do. Some days this will be harder than not, but if you create that momentum early in the morning, you stand a good chance of winning.

How does one create momentum in their personal life? It is clear from a fight that the combatant who lands the most hits meanwhile sustains the least damage puts himself in an attack posture. A good start means overpowering your opponent early on. But you can't really punch time. Instead, you build momentum by priming your thoughts towards following through. Each thought you have no matter how insignificant it feels like will eventually determine some action that you take. It is vital to wake up in the morning from a position of forwarding movement rather than the usual slough until the coffee hits. This is easier said than done for most people. Momentum starts by reaffirming your goals and the actions that must be done to work towards those goals.

Think about all the positive things associated with reaching your goals. Think about the reward and how handsomely your efforts will pay off in the future. Keep your eye on the prize, as they say. Waking up from this position will allow you to make better decisions throughout the day. At the first instance that your mind veers off into the land of instant gratification, your momentum will be there to pull you back. What is the real cost of slacking off? It could mean putting an end to your momentum, and therefore losing the fight.

Create a morning routine that will get you out of bed quickly and tackling the day with gusto. Here there are the usual complaints of not being a morning person and needing caffeine to really do anything. The resistance you feel upon waking up serves in your favor. Getting over this resistance then is a form of strength that you can exercise on the daily. Do whatever you have to do to get yourself going. Put on some music, stretch, or go for a walk. Before you set out on whatever it is you do that day, have a plan ready.

Use "lookaheads" to gauge everything you are scheduled to do. What chores need to be done besides going to work? What social engagements are you scheduled to attend? In short, figure out what your free time window looks like as early as possible. A plan is vital for success. And while plans don't always go as planned, they still give you a baseline from which to act. Star athletes always have a strategy in mind before going on a fight. It may or may not work in their favor, but at least they have a method for their success.

Once that is done, get moving and never drop your momentum until you finish up that last Pomodoro for the day.

Chapter 49. Reach Your Goals

As previously mentioned, setting goals goes hand-in-hand with time management. You cannot claim that you are good at managing time when you lack goals. It is important to stop and question yourself about how you set your goals. Are you the type of person who sets big goals and takes massive steps toward achieving these goals? Or rather, are you one of those individuals who opt to set SMART goals and develop practical measures to meet them? Without a doubt, there are plenty of theories out there about setting goals. Therefore, it can be easy to get blown by the wind if you don't know what is right for you.

One of the main reasons that people set goals is to increase their productivity. This means that more work will be successfully completed in less time.

So, having goals implies that you will be managing your time well. This chapter aims to take you through goal setting in time management. Through the information delivered in this section, you will be better placed to create realistic goals that are measurable and time-bound.

Essential Principles in Setting Goals

Most people set goals for anything that they plan to do. Often, we find ourselves planning for the day even without our knowledge. If you have developed a habit of setting goals, it will not be difficult for you to list some of the things that you wish to achieve in the next two months or one year. However, this is where most of us go wrong. Goal setting is not just about deciding what you want. There is more to this than what we actually understand. According to professors Gary Latham and Edwin Locke, there is a science behind the entire concept of setting goals (Casano, 2019). This is what influenced them to write *A Theory of Goal Setting and Task Performance*, which features the following principles of goal setting. These principles are succinctly discussed in the following paragraphs.

Clarity

This is the first principle, which defines whether your goal is effective or not. Just as the name suggests, your goal ought to be

clearly defined. A clear goal should be one that you can picture yourself reaching. You should find it easy to envision yourself after achieving the goal that you have set.

Setting unclear goals is not advisable because it will cause you to fumble around with what you want in your life. This happens due to the fact that you are never certain about what you want. The worst thing is that there is nothing that you will achieve which will impress you. There was nothing that you had set out to obtain. Accordingly, expect to get lost and settle for less.

Take an ordinary example of a weight-loss goal that one states because they simply want to shed some pounds. Yet, this goal is vague. You cannot envisage yourself on the other side of losing weight because you don't know how much you will be losing.

A clear goal would be reframed to mention the specific NUMBER of pounds that you wish to lose and the time frame that you are giving yourself. In this case, an ideal goal would be planning to lose 15 pounds in three months.

The idea of setting clear goals is not just to help you picture yourself living your dream, but it is also beneficial in terms of tracking progress. You will know how far off you are if you fail to reach your goal.

Challenge

Clarity is not the only ingredient that you require for your goal to be deemed effective. It is crucial to make sure that the goal you set is challenging. Why should your goal be challenging? You will gain nothing good by setting easy-to-achieve goals. In fact, you will only be lying to yourself. Conversely, challenging goals will bring a sense of accomplishment. As such, you will have a valid reason to celebrate.

Using the example of the weight-loss goal discussed above, you will not feel excited if you lost three pounds in a span of three months. What this means is that you did not put in extra effort to lose weight. Your goals should drive you. They should be something worth sweating for. This is the best way for you to feel the joy of winning.

Commitment

The third principle, as proposed by Latham and Locke's theory, is

commitment. It is vital that you show concern about what you are doing. When setting your goals, you shouldn't just set them for the sake of doing it. Rather, you ought to display some emotional commitment to what you are doing. As pointed out in the previous principle, your goals should be challenging. This means that you will need some level of dedication to overcome these challenges. Without this, you will easily surrender on your mission.

Feedback

Goals also need reliable and consistent feedback. After setting your monthly goals, it is essential that you get feedback as to whether you are on track or not. In addition, feedback will give you some insight to understand what works and what doesn't. This allows you to polish your goals along the way to make sure that you focus on what you think will serve you best.

With reference to the example of losing weight, the last thing that you need is to find out two months later that your weight-loss plan didn't work. Ideally, the best strategy would be to gauge your performance weekly and find out the best exercises that will contribute to rapid weight loss. Therefore, feedback is highly important in goal setting.

Task Complexity

Another principle that you should bear in mind when setting goals relates to task complexity. Sure, you will be setting a challenging goal to achieve. However, there is a trick that you can utilize to make sure that the goal is less challenging and attainable. This involves breaking down the bigger goal into smaller manageable goals. The advantage gained here is that you will feel that the task is less complex than it was before. You should avoid discouraging yourself in the process of trying to achieve your goals. For that reason, breaking down complex tasks comes highly recommended.

Setting SMART Goals

As a means of ensuring that your goals meet the principles detailed in the preceding paragraphs, you ought to make sure that your goals are SMART goals. The term "SMART" is an acronym used to describe the aspects of a specified goal. A SMART goal is:

- Specific

- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic/relevant
- Time-bound

If you are going to set SMART goals, you should confirm that your goal meets the components of a SMART goal.

Specific

A good goal is specific. It should be clear-cut about what you want to achieve from your mission. What are you going to do? Setting specific goals will motivate you to find ideal ways of achieving them. To determine whether your goal is specific or not, you should be in a position to point out clearly what you expect to achieve.

Measurable

Can your goal be measured? Depending on how you are working toward your goal, it should be possible to track your progress. Through regular assessments, you will determine whether or not you are moving in the right direction. Take note of the fact that tracking your progress also provides feedback to make you aware of the tactics that work and those that don't. You can therefore adjust accordingly based on the results you get.

Achievable

It goes without saying that your goals should be achievable. In other words, they should be within your reach. Whether in business or in real life, the goals you set should be practical. In business, for example, you cannot set goals that demand a lot from your enterprise when you lack the required resources. Hence, your goals ought to be reasonable enough.

Relevant

This aspect relates to the notion of ensuring that your goals matter to you. They should reflect what you really want to achieve in life. It should drive you to the end of the tunnel where you realize your ambitions. In line with your personal goals, they should embody the type of person that you are. You cannot set personal goals that do not reflect who you are. As such, it is vital to make sure that your goals are not only realistic but also relevant.

Time-Bound

So, you have set your goals and you are ready to put in effort toward achieving them. Well, before anything else, you should ask yourself whether you have a defined timeframe for achieving these goals. When are you going to complete your mission? Will you be done in a week, a month, or a year? Timely goals will guarantee that you prioritize your goals accordingly. This means that you will attend to more urgent matters first and schedule others for a more appropriate time.

Benefits of Setting Goals

From a general perspective, one would argue that goals help in giving people a direction in their lives. Of course, setting the right goals will guarantee that you make sound decisions that will

ultimately bear a positive influence in your life. Take an ordinary example of a weekend that you failed to plan for. It is quite likely that you will spend time lazing around. Since you don't know what to do, you will feel bored. You will be ready to engage in any activity as long as it can keep you busy.

The situation can be totally different if you have goals to fill your time schedule. You will focus on spending your weekend productively with family and friends. Also, this can be a great time for you to exercise and seek personal development.

A Reason to Wake Up Every Morning

Perhaps you have been feeling that your days are longer and that there is nothing serious to fill up your day's schedule. If you have been feeling this way, then most certainly you should set goals. Having a purpose to push toward will give you a reason to rise up early in the morning. People who have developed a habit of setting goals will attest to the fact that there are times when they can wake up without using their alarms. This is because the mind has been programmed to work and strive to meet set goals.

Many times, we find ourselves failing at what we do because we do not set the right goals. There are numerous times when you might have heard folks saying that they need to wake up early to get to work. Their goal here is too vague. It is imperative to look deep within yourself and find out why you work in the first place. Is it because you love what you do or that you want more money?

The worst thing that can happen to you is to find yourself in a ditch where you always work for the sake of it. This means that you will never be motivated to engage in any activity at work. Unfortunately, this leads to depression and other health-related ailments. Often, you will try to leave work early to escape obligations. If this is what you have been feeling, then you need to reconsider setting the right goals.

Get Rid of Distractions

Going through life without goals will also lead to many distractions. Usually, you will feel confused about what you should do. The moment anything comes along, you will not hesitate to jump into the wagon. Normally, this is not a trait that you would associate with successful people. They always have a goal to keep them focused throughout the year. Interestingly, sometimes they are too

focused to spare some time to have fun. Eventually, their efforts pay off and they are the envy of society.

An Opportunity to Improve

Having goals also ensures that you improve in what you do. Setting clear and concise goals provides one with an opportunity to grow. You will wake up every morning striving to be the best version of yourself. Athletes are a good example of how goals can help you improve in what you are doing.

Athletes have goals that drive them to train every day. Their aim is to win competitions and all kinds of prizes that are ahead of them. This is what pushes them to train so that they can be the best at what they do.

Similarly, this can also be applied to your personal life and in your career. Goals foster growth because you are aware of what you are after and how to achieve it.

Live Your Dreams

Set clear goals and you will live to see your dreams come true. With the constant motivation that will drive you toward your goal, there is nothing that will stop you from living the life that you have always yearned for. As such, goals not only motivate you, but they also provide you with a clear path toward success. Often, you will surround yourself with positive thoughts relating to your anticipated success. By the law of attraction, there is a guarantee that bliss will come your way.

Goal-Setting Exercise

Annie Dillard once made it clear that “how we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives” (Thompson, 2019). Undeniably, this makes a lot of sense. Our lives are a sum of the little things that we do every day. Concerning goal setting, this is a call to action that we ought to focus on setting daily goals to define how we live our lives.

The following goal-setting exercise is something that you can relate to and practice every day. The aim of this exercise is to ensure that you schedule how you want your day to be. So, what should a perfect day look like for you?

On a piece of paper, write down how you want your average perfect day to look. In this case, you should aim to start from the time you

wake up to late in the evening. Some of the questions that you should aim to answer include:

- At what time do you start your day?
- What is the first thing you do in the morning?
- Do you meditate?
- Do you hit the gym as early as 6 a.m.?
- Do you pray?
- Do you go to work after your morning routine?

When writing down how you would spend time during the day, make sure that you pay attention to detail. This will help in envisioning yourself doing that which you are writing down. Again, it is vital that you consider this day as an average day that you can manage to live over and over again. Of course, you cannot turn this exercise into a holiday routine. You can't go on holidays every day. The idea here is to come up with a plan for a day that you can re-live.

Don't assume anything that you are writing. Find a quiet place and engage in this exercise seriously. If you are keen enough, you will realize that there are particular habits that you want your life to embody. For instance, it is quite likely that you have thought about waking up earlier. Also, you may have noted an important activity that you often fail to attend to. This exercise is meant to reveal to you that you can achieve your average perfect day by taking the first step. That's all you need to do.

Indeed, you will be making immense changes in your life. Regardless, you ought to look at the bigger picture of what you are doing. You are transforming into the best version of yourself. Therefore, you will spend your day happier and motivated. Without doubt, living your life a day at a time will surely see you spend the rest of your life filled with joy and gratitude.

As a reminder, you don't have to make huge changes in your daily schedule right from the word "Go." Rather, start small. Make minor changes and start engaging in productive activities that you didn't do before. Find some spare time to meditate in the morning. Hit the gym, if possible. Go for walks while you meditate. These minor changes will raise your self-awareness to new levels. In time, life

will unfold itself in ways that you can't imagine, simply because you have your days planned.

Chapter 50. What is Time Management and Why Is It Important

Time after time, we end up doing things at the last minute because of poor time management and procrastination. Procrastination is the biggest enemy when it comes to productivity, especially when we cannot afford to waste any time.

We don't appreciate the importance of time until it's of the essence. In this chapter, we will look at the various principles of time management. These principles of time management make it possible for us to concentrate our time in an effective manner to boost focus and productivity. Let's begin.

What is time management?

Before we continue, it's important for us to understand what time management really is about.

Most of us yearn to have more 24 hours in a day. We all want more time to finish all our tasks and still have some downtime. We all have so much to do and so little time. We believe that it's impossible for us to reach our goals in time and that it's all a waste. However, it's entirely possible for you to finish all our tasks within a designated timeframe if we use proper time management.

Time management is the way you organize and plan the time spent on each activity. We run out of time because we spend more time on trivialities counterproductive activities. Therefore, we need to plan and assign ourselves a specific time for each of our tasks.

The purpose of time management is not just to preserve time but to boost effectiveness and productivity.

What Happens When You Do Not Manage Your Time Wisely? Poor time management will cause many problems and troublesome results, this includes:

- Missed deadlines
- Horrible work quality
- Weak workflow

- Additional stress
- A bad professional reputation.

Failing to manage your time will make you unable to complete your tasks on time, making you come off as unreliable and incompetent. Everyone will lose faith in your abilities. Even if you are terrific at what you do, they won't consider giving you more work or a promotion, because they don't think highly of you. Tardiness and missed deadlines will damage your professional reputation as well. This will begin to affect your personal life because you will be unable to pay rent and buy essential things.

The difference between urgent and important

Lots of people believe that urgent tasks and important tasks are the same things, but they're not. Urgent things must be done immediately, but if you don't do them it's not the end of the world. Important things don't necessarily need to be done right away, but not doing them will have negative consequences. Let's take the following examples to understand the difference between the two:

Urgent Tasks: Phone calls, upcoming deadlines, and any sort of situation where you need to act quickly are urgent. Answering an email, that needs to be answered, is an urgent task as well.

Important Tasks: Important tasks help bring you closer to your long-term goals. Such as starting a company, writing a book, meet new people, get rid of bad habits, develop some skill, etc. It can also be other things that such as doctor appointments, household chores, and hanging out with friends. They are all important depending on your values.

Knowing the difference between urgent tasks and important tasks plays a crucial role when learning how to manage your time. It helps you know which task to complete first and helps you plan your day much better.

How to become an effective time manager

Before we learn how to become an effective time manager, there's something you need to know. There's this misconception that your productivity is determined by how busy you are. This is false. Being busy does not mean you're being productive. Effectiveness determines productivity. Busy people use their focus to try to do everything. Productive people use time management to focus on the

most significant tasks, smoothly and methodically, frequently avoiding “busy” work. These effective time management techniques will immensely help reduce your “busy-ness” and increase your productivity, here’s how.

Set Your Priorities Straight: As mentioned before, the first step is to figure out the things you need to complete right away. Use a to-do list and put your most urgent tasks first, then add the other important tasks you need to do later. You will manage your time better if you put aside all the unimportant and irrelevant tasks that are wasting your time. Complete the things you must do first then move on to the next one.

Be Attentive of How Much Time You Have: You need to know how much time you have on your hands to complete everything on your to-do list. The best method to develop attentive time is by assigning yourself the number of hours you want to put into your work. If you want to work for eight hours, you can divide that time between the tasks on your to-do list. How much time you work depends on your work goals and the number of complex tasks you have on your to-do list.

Assign and Complete Your Work Within the Timeframe: You need to plan the estimated amount of time it takes for you to finish your task and complete it within the designated timeframe. Once you’re done, check it off and reward yourself.

Be Sure to Give Yourself Some Time to Relax: You are human who needs to take a break and relax every now and then. Make sure you cut some time to give to your family, friends, and yourself.

Stay Organized: Do your best to place your things where they belong at all times. Keeping your workplace neat will save you time since there is no unnecessary searching involved. It also helps keep you focused and undistracted. You can also try using an organizer or planner to help keep you on track and on schedule.

Say ‘No’ More Often: It’s a bad habit to say ‘yes’ to everything all the time. Sometimes you need to say ‘no’, especially if the person asking for the favor is a relative or a close friend. Saying ‘no’ does not mean you’re being rude, greedy, or insensitive. These are all lies to help that makes it difficult to say no. Saying ‘no’ will help save you a huge amount of time. If you have something important to do, you need to say ‘no’ to anything else that gets in your way whether

it's more work, relaxing, someone else, etc. People will understand you have something important to do, so you should not worry about it.

Make A Weekly Schedule: A weekly schedule can help show all the planned time-slots and all the things you need to get done for the following week. When making your weekly schedule, be realistic to slot in tasks. Remember you only have 24 hours in a day and you're not going to use all of it solely for work. You need to set some time for your personal life, lunch breaks, sleeping, relaxing, etc. Once you get the hang of it, it will keep you motivated and help you know which tasks are recurrent.

Secrets of a productive morning ritual

Do you want to become insanely productive in life? A powerful morning ritual is the key to do it. When you wake up very early, you are ahead of everybody else. For example, let's look at the routines of most people. Most people wake up around 6-7 am, they check their emails and prepare for work. They arrive to work around 8-9 am and work until 4-5 pm. Then they go home and relax. Many people follow this routine throughout their entire life. This is the schedule that the majority of the world follows, so to make it work in your favor, you must be ahead of it. If you wake up early, you have the advantage of being able to get ready and work before everyone else.

Mornings serve as a great time to be creative, exercise, along with as have some personal time. This makes a morning routine a very meaningful element of effective management along with productivity. Studies have proven that productivity levels are high in the mornings compared at night, hence, it's important that you climb out of bed in the early mornings to achieve more.

Your mornings will influence the rest of your day. Think of it like this: a peaceful and productive morning will provide peace and productivity during the day, whereas a frantic morning ritual will lead to a cluttered and stressful day. In other words, creating powerful and effective mornings will guarantee that you have the energy and proper mentality to work effectively during your day. Once you develop your morning routine, you will notice an improvement in productivity, motivation, focus, and other areas of your life. Here is how you can make your mornings work for you:

Become an Early Riser: According to the Journal of Applied Social Psychology, early risers are extremely enthusiastic compared to night owls with regard to their willingness to take action. Their research also indicates that people who are used to wake up at a certain time are more proactive. If you're not a natural early bird, adopt an enjoyable morning routine where you become genuinely excited to wake up.

Make Your Mornings Easier: Take some time the day before to make your mornings run smoother. Make sure you know exactly what you're going to do the minute you wake up. For example, if you want to go jogging in the morning, place your workout clothes in a notable and eye-catching place. If you want to begin your project, ensure everything is well organized the night before. Even if you don't have anything plan, you can always make your mornings run a little bit smoother. For example, you can prepare all the ingredients for tomorrow's breakfast or get a book you want to read closer to your bed. Whatever it is, you will save a whole lot time and have an easier morning if you invest some time the night before.

Make A To-Do List the Day Before: The best time to schedule your day is right before you fall to sleep. When you make your to-do list, organize all the tasks you have ahead and prioritize everything you need to get done. However, don't overdo it and give yourself too much you can handle.

Make Sure You Get A Full's Night Sleep: Lack of sleep will disturb your focus levels, and consequently, your productivity. Always aim to get in at least 8 hours of sleep each night.

Make Health And Fitness A Priority: Exercising early in the morning comes with numerous benefits which include a boost in focus and mental clarity. Just by doing twenty minutes of cardio in the morning you'll feel more awake and ready to handle your day by supplying yourself with this additional energy boost.

Stay Away From The Snooze Button: If you fight waking up by pressing the snooze button regularly, you will lose time from your morning routine. You will struggle with your routine at first, but you'll eventually find yourself rolling out of the bed with plenty of energy and motivation to get everything you need to be done before leaving for work.

Start Your Day Off On The Right Note: You are in complete control of your own success. You have the power and the ability to have charge of your own destiny. Always begin your day with an expectation that your actions matter. This will set a positive tone for your day.

Avoid Checking Your Email First Thing: Most of us often check our emails and social media the moment we wake up. Doing your work shortly after waking up is a dreadful way to begin your day. You now take priority in answering and acknowledging others rather than setting the course for your day. Do your best to avoid looking at your email and do something meaningful like exercising, meditating, or writing in your journal. Once you're at work you can check your email and start working.

Eat A Healthy Breakfast: Food supplies you with the energy you need to focus, and breakfast is especially critical because it gives you the energy boost to carry out your tasks for the day. Eat something light and healthy in the morning and refrain from eating processed carbs that could destroy your energy and motivation.

How to actually make time for yourself if you're a really busy person

In a busy world like today, time management is one of the most sought-after skill. Once you learn time management, your entire day is in your own hands. You can adjust your schedule to how you see fit and decrease any wasteful and stress-related activities from your life. Here are some approaches that will help you achieve success in time management:

The Clock Time Approach Vs Real Time: There are two types of time: CLOCK TIME and RELATIVE TIME. For clock time:

- 60 seconds = 1 minute
- 60 minutes = 1 hour
- 24 hours = 1 day
- 365 days = 1 year

If you turn 36 years old, you are 36 years of age, no more or no less. You get the idea of how clock time works.

In REAL TIME, time is relative. Time either drags or flies by, in accordance with the activity you are carrying out. For instance, 2 hours writing an essay may feel like 20 years. Even though playing a video game for 2 hours feel like 20 minutes.

REAL-TIME argues the fact behind time management methods and practices. It also demonstrates that we do not live in CLOCK TIME but we live off of REAL-TIME scenarios, a place in which time usually passes by quickly or slowly. So, time goes by faster when you're having fun, and time drags to the point of infinity when you are sick or working on a project you don't have an interest in.

Time management skills that depend on real-time are easier to master as you only need the proper mentality to be successful. It lives in both your conscious and subconscious mind. You are its creator, and thus, it's easier to manage it. The only advice for someone applying this method is to remove any limitations or barriers that you put on yourself. It's also essential to get rid of any self-sabotaging behaviors that you carry. This includes people, locations, habits, or things.

In the REAL-TIME approach, there are 3 ways to devote your time. These are thoughts, speech, and enthusiasm. Therefore, your time management should be centralized on these three elements.

Invest Your Time In Important Things: The things you need to do that brings you closer to your goals should have an allocated time for it. Whatever it is that you want, make sure you spend time on it each day. Plan meetings and arrange the time when these activities will begin and end. And develop strong self-control to maintain these arrangements, despite anything else that comes your way.

Record Your Progress: You should carry a diary schedule and write down each of your ideas, meetings, and activities you have for that week. This will help you see the amount of work or effort you can complete. Then explore where and how you are spending your precious time. You'll notice the amount of time you're investing and the amount of time being wasted on counterproductive activities. This includes social media and texting. Schedule separate time for these activities, if you cannot live without them, but always leave most of your time on meaningful tasks, planning, exercises, and practice that contributes to your success.

Be Prepared For Accident And Distractions: Things will never go

according to plan. Make sure you add more time to whatever you're doing. For instance, if you're studying, someone may knock at your door and take you away from the task at hand. Or you might spill coffee all over your desk or any sort of blunder. Be prepared to spend extra time on these mishaps and interruptions to stay on track.

Ask For Help: You are not in this alone. You can ask help from your family and friends to get some of that extra weight off your shoulders. This can be asking someone to complete chores or your spouse to go grocery shopping. Handing over duties like this can help provide you more free time to use on yourself.

Realize Everything Won't Be Perfect: Most often, people are hanged up over the idea for everything to be perfect. This can mean spending more time than needed on work, answering work emails on your days off, or not going to sleep until your home is clean. Realize that you are only human and can't get everything done the way you want it. Make sure you schedule some time to stop everything you're doing and focus on something you enjoy.

Review Before You Work: Take five minutes before each planned task, and give yourself quick bullet points and thoughts to decide what you need to get done at the designated time. This will help you recognize what your end goal achievements look like before you even begin. What's more, it will keep you organized and feel accomplished. Take five minutes after every task, and figure out if your planned result was accomplished. If not, go over what you might have missed, and rearrange the task for another time.

Avoid Distractions: Obviously, you can't get work done if outside sources keep tempting you. Put up a "Do Not Disturb" notice online or outside your door, when you need to concentrate on the task at hand. This will reduce any distractions you might have during the designated time.

Don't Fall Victim To Your Phone: Practice not looking at your phone whenever it begins to ring or a message comes flying in. Just because they come into sight, doesn't mean you go check it out.

Chapter 51. Recommended Strategies to Deal with Stress

Research shows that about 46% of people suffer from stress because of their workload. Also, about 40% of workers say that their working environments are very stressful (Boyd, 2019). These statistics show that stress affects how we work, which in turn has a negative impact on our relationships. Unfortunately, everyone goes through stress in their lives. Some people have more stressful situations to deal with than others. A major difference between people is how they deal with stress.

Some people allow stress to affect their performance while others have effective ways of coping. Individuals who work in demanding environments are more likely to suffer from work-related stress, compared to others who work in friendly workplaces. In line with time management, stress will have a negative impact on your time usage. If you are going through a difficult situation, there is a good chance that you will not work effectively and efficiently. This means that you will experience dwindling productivity.

Likewise, poor time management will also lead to stress. If you have a lot of assignments pending, you will not be happy about it. The struggle to beat deadlines will overwhelm you. What's more, you will have limited time to spend with family and close friends. This will hurt you even more. A happy and fulfilling life is one in which you have a balance of your work life and your personal life. On that note, learning how to manage your stress will have a positive impact on your time management. So, let's find out how you can deal or cope with stress at work and in your personal life.

Common Causes of Stress

Do you often feel irritated at work? If so, have your colleagues noticed it? Maybe you always feel tired after a long day at work. Alternatively, you might have noticed that you are struggling to concentrate on the projects you are working on. Far from that, it could be that you are feeling depressed about your life in general. Why do you think this is happening to you? Well, these are symptoms that you are stressed. If you have been experiencing these symptoms, then you might have wondered what is driving you to feel like your world is coming to an end. Below are common

causes of stress.

Poor Planning

One of the main reasons that you feel stressed at work is because you don't plan your day. Since you are not planning, there is a high likelihood that you are not feeling productive. This creates a void where you feel empty and useless. Therefore, if you don't have a plan for some of the things you will be doing at work, rest assured that you will feel the burden of working in this environment.

Long Working Hours

A lot has been said and written about productivity. Working for longer hours doesn't mean that you are productive. You might be burning the midnight oil just because you failed to utilize your prime time wisely. Sadly, these long working hours will gain you the feeling that you never have time for other more important activities. Stress will eat you up. You will feel that you don't have a reason to live because you never spend quality time with your friends and family. Therefore, working overtime is just poor time management. There is no other way of finding positivity in working extra hours if you wasted time during the day.

Boring Work

A shocking statistic about people and their working environments is that half of them hate their workplaces. About 53% of Americans say that they are not happy at work (Sturt & Nordstrom, 2019). The worst thing about this is that it leaves people with regrets because they have the perception that they are wasting time. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the number of people quitting their jobs has been on the rise every year since 2010 (Maurer, 2019). Therefore, it is no secret that a good number of people hate what they are doing and this leads to stress.

Conflicting Demands

There is a good chance that you will feel stressed at work if you are dealing with conflicting demands. Normally, this happens when you have more than one supervisor. One of them will demand this from you and the other will threaten to fire you if you don't do what they want. Pressure will mount on you and you will be tempted to quit.

Strategies to Help You Manage Stress

The causes of stress pointed out above are not an exhaustive list.

However, it reveals the fact that there are many people out there who are obliged to work because they have no option. They have to take care of their families. As a result, nothing can prevent them from working in harsh environments just to put food on the table. Nevertheless, you should not allow stress to ruin your life. You deserve to be happy. You are doing your best to provide for your family and the last thing they need is to see you going through depression. The following stress management techniques should help you mitigate the daily life stressors that you have to put up with.

Talk to Someone

There is power in sharing what you are going through. You don't have to beat yourself up over the idea that you cannot get anything done. Talk to someone you trust. This helps you feel relieved. Cry it out, if possible. There is no harm in doing this. After all, everybody goes through stress at one point in their lives. You simply have to embrace the idea of letting it go.

Delegate

If you have to work overtime just to beat deadlines, it calls for delegation. Understand that you don't have to do everything. There are other people out there who are just as skilled and they could help you meet your deadlines without putting pressure on yourself.

Get Organized

Perhaps the fact that you are going through a difficult time at work is a sign that you are not organized. This impacts your productivity. Organize your working schedule by creating a practical to-do list. Use the time management techniques discussed in this guide to organize how you will work. Ultimately, this will have an influence on your levels of stress.

Start Your Day Right

How you start your day will have a huge impact on how well your day will unfold. If you begin your day by quarreling with your spouse, there is a good chance that you will spend the rest of the day feeling irritated. You might find it difficult to handle your morning routines at home. This could have an effect on how you start your day. If there are important tasks that you should complete before going to work, wake up early.

Winning your day in the morning is the surest way to set the right tone for the day. You should not let any negative emotions ruin the good day that you are having.

Ask for Clear Instructions

One of the reasons that you might be stressed at work is because you don't know what is expected of you. Similarly, constantly changing instructions will leave you feeling stressed since you will not complete a project in time before you go home. To avoid this, ask for clear instructions from your supervisor.

Keep Perfectionism in Check

Your perfectionism could cause your frustrations at work. You ought to keep in mind that perfectionism will affect you and your colleagues. If you are looking to offer perfect results at work, eliminate this mentality by simply doing your best. This is what matters most. In the event that things fail to work out, you will be glad that you tried your best.

Listen to Music

You can also spend time listening to music as an effective way of coping with stress. Playing your favorite music can spur happy feelings regardless of the situation you are going through.

Exercise Regularly

Taking good care of yourself will also help you feel great. Feel-good chemicals are released by the body each time you hit the gym. The good news is that working out opens doors for opportunities to meet new people. Interacting with them can help take your mind away from a stressful working environment.

Ask for Professional Help

Releasing your stress on your family members is the last thing that you should do. This will only make things worse. Instead of taking your frustrations out on your loved ones, consider asking for professional help. Psychology experts will help you get the assistance you need to make sure that your stress doesn't progress into depression.

There is nothing as frustrating as having to deal with stress on your own. The worst thing is that you never seem to realize that stress affects you in many ways. It not only affects you, but it also affects

those around you, including friends and family. Stress can be managed. You don't have to walk along this dark path on your own. Talk to someone about the experience that you are going through. There is nothing to lose by sharing. In fact, you will be helping yourself in many ways.

Before quitting your only source of income, take a moment to utilize the techniques which have been discussed herein on how to reduce stress. There is more to living than a life full of frustrations and regrets.

Chapter 52. Motivation

Everyone who says they're having lack of motivation is lying because everyone has it. Otherwise, we wouldn't do anything all day. Motivation is the precursor to any action. Without the necessary spark in mind to do an activity, how could we say we do anything at all? Every day there is motivation to do something—to eat, to go to the bathroom, to wash oneself after a long day, to do the things you like. Procrastination is simply the misapplication of motivation. If motivation were a sword, the person procrastinating would wield it with shaky hands, stabbing this way and that with zero effectiveness. The person who knows how to wield motivation in contrast moves with grace like a samurai warrior. Anyone can learn how to wield their motivation; it just takes a bit of self-reflection and grit.

“What do you want?”

It's a simple question that people struggle to answer. To truly want something goes beyond the scope of chasing instant desires. If somebody wants McDonald's, they can easily drive down the street to their nearest restaurant. If somebody wants to compete in the Olympics, they need to do so much more. An immediate desire is just that—a whim that lasts for as long as you can resist temptation. To truly want something means that you have a target in mind. Something you want to put your time to achieve. Usually, this want is important to you. It can be a drastic change in your life like getting the dream body you always wanted or working towards financial independence. Maybe there's that novel you always wanted to write but never found the courage to start it. Whatever the case, a daily habit of procrastination makes it near impossible to achieve.

Wanting something hard enough can motivate you to rewire the brain every time an immediate desire pops into your head. Do some other meaningless task or get started on that business idea? Text your favorite friend all day or learn how to program computers, being completely undistracted? By allocating the time spent doing these empty tasks to more important things you are effectively adding value to that time. An hour spent consuming entertainment is markedly less valuable than on the hour spent learning a new

skill.

The program in this book is designed around 30 days spent making sufficient progress towards some goal. The 30 days are not meant to be enough to complete or reach your goal (though that may well be the case) but to get you into the right mindset to beat chronic procrastination. The program does require you to set out on some goal you can work on. This can be a new skill, doing some productive activity or working towards something else.

One cannot simply defeat procrastination by virtue of wanting to. There has to be a reason

why you do it, something that you work towards.

The Awesome Force of Time

Time is like water. As Bruce Lee reminds us, water can either flow or crash, often to such devastating effect. Time flows at a snail's pace when you do the same things every day. Go to school or work and come back home to your favorite past times. Time crashes down on you when you are under stress from procrastinating too long. Suddenly, you find yourself in your mid-twenties without a clue where your life is going, or you find yourself in your 50's wondering where all your time went. As for both, these important junctures of your life are already running out, especially if you feel like you haven't used it properly. It is a terrible feeling to bare. Time has immeasurable weight, and it can all come down at once when you least expect it.

In contrast, living a harmonious life and working with time rather than against it keeps you in the right balance. You avoid the evanescent waves of regret from crashing down on you. Time flows like a steady river. Over time, it can even cut rock into a vast canyon. Your life is like that canyon. The better you direct your time, the more rock you can chip against. A canyon can be anything. A career, mastering a skill, having success in business, a happy marriage and family. The sky is the limit. But those things can only be achieved through a steady and persistent application of your will. Maybe playing video games for 8 hours a day will make you an expert. Maybe. But those same eight hours applied towards something inherently useful create a stronger return on investment. Most people who play games for that long aren't trying to make it in the eSports business anyways. They are simply looking to escape

from their daily lives, or they are looking for something to do.

Time on earth is limited. Each day that passes by is another missed opportunity to move your river further against the rock. Otherwise, there is a perpetual drought. Then when you least expect it, your peers have dug themselves impressively deep canyons, and yours is still only a few centimeters in depth.

Motivation as a Weapon

Everyone has something they want to do anything at all. It's something that requires extra effort to achieve. Even mundane desires like moving out, changing states, or buying a fancy car can all be channeled into energy. This energy is like your river. The sharper you hone it, the better it will cut. Precision water jets can cut into almost any material and so can your motivation if you wield it correctly. Motivation is a thing that gets you up in the morning. But it is also that nagging voice in the back of your head that tells you to stop wasting your time with less important tasks. We all feel this to some degree. Some call it self-guilt, and others simply learn to ignore. This is a fatal mistake, as this voice is what your gut is telling you to do.

Remember that a day lost is a day you can never regain. Fight against the dying of the day, armed only with the knowledge that you want to do better. Life comes our way, and we retreat to our comfort zones. We become used to going to work or school and feel that beyond that everything is just relaxation. And there is nothing wrong with being satisfied with such a configuration if it supports your lifestyle. But—and this is a big but—you could do so much better. Your dreams don't necessarily need to be mere fantasies. If you apply yourself and direct your motivation, then they could become a reality.

Nobody is saying that the impossible will one day come true for you, or that you can achieve anything you set your mind to. The only guarantee is that by doing the same old things, you can be sure that you will never make something greater.

There are 365 days in a year. A whopping 121 of these days will be spent sleeping. Hopefully, within that state of rest, you are recovering from a well-spent day and not simply giving your tired retinas a break from the monitor screen. Another 136 of these days will be spent at work, school or traveling in between those places

and the home. That still leaves 107 full days to manage your time. It's not quite as much as 365, but it is still an impressive amount. Use it wisely and cut against the rock with a persistent flow, or brace for the coming tsunami that you will feel in 5, 10, or 20 years' time.

Things to keep in mind:

- Motivation is the precursor to any form of action.
- Some forms of motivation (like what drive us to procrastinate) are bad, and others (the kind that drives us to succeed) are good.
- Setting up actionable goals and other milestones are key to breaking cycles of procrastination.
- Undealt with procrastination may result in regret years later.

Things to try out:

- Make a list of your top goals. Separate these into two categories: short term and long term. Short term goals are the ones you can complete in a few months to a year or less. Long term goals are the ones that can take many years or an entire lifetime to complete.
- Go through each goal in the list and identify the things you will need to do to accomplish it. Does it require going back to school? Practicing something every day? A goal, whether it is a long term or short term one will require a series of steps to be completed.
- Are some of these requirements more realistic than others? Do you actually intend on following up some of these goals or are they just hearsay?
- Pick apart a handful of these goals that you truly believe you can accomplish, or that you have already started taking actionable steps towards completing. These are the goals that you should work on throughout the program.

Chapter 53. The 80/20 Rule of Time Management

This may come as a shock, yet in spite of all the discussion about life adjusts, you can profit massively from bringing a little imbalance into your day. I'm alluding to the 80/20 control of time administration, which is grounded in what is known as the Pareto Principle.

Envision you are the CEO of an organization and you have a sales force. In our current reality where everything is equivalent, you will expect that everybody adds to your deals proportionately — i.e. 20% of the representatives add to 20% of the sales, half add to half of the deals, and 80% of the workers add to 80% of the deals.

In any case, consider the possibility that rather than a 1-1 relationship, you discover that 80% of your sales are contributed by 20% of your staff.

This is the thing that the 80/20 control is about — 80% of the impacts in a circumstance originated from 20% of the causes. This marvel was first found by Vilfredo Pareto, an Italian economist who found that 20% of the general population in Italy controls 80% of the riches and land. He initially watched the standard when cultivating and seeing that 20% of his peapods in his garden yielded 80% of the aggregate collected peas.

The 80/20 is otherwise called "The Pareto Principle" or "The Law of the Vital Few" — alluding to an indispensable couple of variables that add to most of the results.

Here are quite recently some of the numerous circumstances where the 80/20 govern can be observed:

Populace: 80% of the populace in England (25.8 million out of 32.3 million) originates from 20% of its urban communities (53 out of 263 urban areas).

Asset Consumption: 70% of the world's vitality, 75% of its metals, and 85% of its timber are devoured by 20% of the world's nations (which have far less than 20 percent of the total populace).

Natural Resources: 80% of Earth's mineral riches is created by a long shot under 20% of the Earth's surface

Riches: 10% of adults claim 85% of the aggregate worldwide

resources.

Utilization: In each industry, a little determination of brands overwhelms the world's usage, e.g., Coca Cola/Pepsi for pop, MS Windows for working frameworks, Samsung and iPhone for cell phones. (I share more in The Market Leader Effect.)

Everyday Life: When you eat out, you more often than not feast at similar eateries (20% out of every conceivable decision).

Business: 80% of offers tend to originate from 20% of clients (your regular customers who adore your work and buy routinely). 80% of compliant tend to originate from 20% of customers.

Relationship: 80% of the esteem you get from connections is from 20% of the general population you know (your dear companions, family, accomplice).

Goal Accomplishment: 80% of the outcomes in your objective will be from 20% of your activities (which means a couple of the primary tasks will add to the greatest results in your goal).

The 80/20 rule states that the connection amongst input and output is once in a while if at any time, adjusted. At the point when applied to work, it implies that around 20 percent of your endeavors deliver 80 percent of the outcomes. Figuring out how to perceive and afterward concentrate on that 20 percent is the way to making the best utilization of your time. Here are two quick tips to create 80/20 considering:

Investigate the general population around you. 20% of your partners, staff, and patients likely give you 80 percent of the support and fulfillment you require. They are your original backers. Take great care of them. In like manner, you can most likely name a few loved ones who might be there for you under any conditions. Make an effort not to set them aside for later.

Look at your work. Ask yourself, "What would I truly like to do with my life and my time? What 20 percent of my job is advisable for me to concentrate on?"

Truth #1: Understanding that Less is More

Right off the bat, not all things are equal. Regardless of what you do, there are dependably a couple of important undertakings that matter. You need to concentrate on the essential few, the 20% high-esteem errands, instead of spreading yourself thin crosswise over

everything. This is otherwise called "Less is more" where doing less will net you more outcomes. This is the same as being effective instead of efficient, something that I discuss in my time administration posts.

Applying "Less is more" means asking yourself:

How can I remove the projects that don't make as much esteem?

How can I concentrate my vitality on exercises that make me more joyful and more satisfied?

Reality #2: Achieving More with Less

Our general public today has a "More with More" outlook. We are informed that we have to accomplish more to be more. In case we're not accomplishing more, we are failures. So, we straddle over various obligations, have our hands continually full, and have schedules so long that they stretch out to the following three months.

However, the more we do, the more depleted we are. As we attempt to keep up with ceaseless needs and obligations, our wellbeing winds down, our social life endures, and all the additional cash we earn goes into paying for more costs and credits. For all the time we spend doing more and more, we in no doubt don't appear to receive more consequently.

Consider the possibility that we don't accomplish "More with More. Imagine a scenario where we truly achieve "More with Less. Where we gain more profit by concentrating on the essential few? By directing all our vitality to the things that matter — not by attempting to pursue each sparkling thing?

The 80/20 lead is about how to get more out of your life. When you scale back on the things that aren't essential, you get more opportunity for the things that are. When you remove assignments that deplete you, you have more vitality and time for the things that matter.

At last, the objective of the 80/20 is to accomplish more with less, so we can make the most out of our time on earth. To concentrate on what gives us the most meaning so that we can accomplish the best satisfaction and joy.

Here are a few signs that will help you to perceive whether you're investing your time as you ought to:

You're in your 80 percent if the accompanying explanations seem to be valid.

You're taking a shot at tasks other individuals need you to. However, you have no interest in them.

You're every now and again taking a shot at undertakings marked "pressing."

You're investing energy in projects you are not great at doing.

Exercises are taking a great deal longer than you anticipated.

You end up whining constantly.

You're in your 20 percent if:

You're occupied with exercises that propel your general reason in life (accepting you recognize what that is — and you ought to!).

You're doing things you have for a long been itching to do or that make you like yourself.

You're working on tasks you don't care for, yet you're doing them knowing they identify with the bigger picture.

You're contracting individuals to do the undertakings you are bad at or don't care for doing.

You're smiling.

Chapter 54. Conclusion

If you're struggling to manage your procrastination habit, you're not alone. All of us have faced the same struggle. In fact, we continue to face it every single day. Curbing the habit is like the experience described by recovering alcoholics seeking long-term sobriety: there's an ever-present temptation to "slip." The potential for relapse is a constant.

Don't be discouraged by this fact. The more you take action whenever you're tempted to put something off, the stronger the habit of doing so will become. Over time, the temptation to procrastinate, always present, will seem less and less powerful. Taking action will become easier and easier.

Having said the above, it's important to realize that no change can happen without your commitment to making it happen. To that end, I urge you to do more than just read *The Procrastination Cure*. Apply the material to your daily life.

Use Part I: Why We Procrastinate as a checklist of sorts to recognize the specific triggers that cause you to procrastinate.

Use Part II: 21 Ways To Beat Your Inner Procrastinator as a playbook in curbing the habit. Incorporate each tactic, one at a time, into your daily process. I'm 100% confident you'll be pleasantly surprised by the results.

Use Part III: When Procrastination HELPS You To Get Things Done as an opportunity to experiment with active procrastination. The practice doesn't work for everybody. But the only way to know whether it works for you is to try it.

This book offers actionable advice on nearly every page. It's purposely light on theory and heavy on practical tips. Here's how I recommend you go through it...

First, given that you're reading this, it's safe to assume you've read *The Procrastination Cure* in its entirety. You're familiar with the core concepts involved with curbing the procrastination habit.

Now, revisit each section. Be an "active" reader as you do so. As you reread Part I, write down your personal procrastination triggers. Take action on the suggestions I've included with them to

lessen their influence on you.

As you reread Part II, apply each of the tactics. As we discussed earlier, proceed slowly. Incorporate one tactic per week, and allow it to become a habit before moving on to the next one.

As you reread Part III, think of ways to slowly integrate active procrastination into your day. Again, do so as an experiment so you can determine if it works for you.

Here's the bottom line: you have the ability to make positive changes in your life. You hold the reins. You're in control. The Procrastination Cure offers a simple roadmap that'll take you from your current circumstances to your desired destination. All that remains is for you to follow the map.

It won't be easy. Nor will it happen quickly. Most of us have enabled our inner procrastinators throughout our lives. So, overcoming the habit might take a significant amount of time. Expect to face internal resistance as your mind struggles to maintain the status quo.

Eventually, if you apply the tips and suggestions provided in this book, you'll find that you're increasingly less inclined to put things off. The temptation to do so will always be present, but you'll be less beholden to it.

That's when you'll know that you've won the battle.

Before you read *The Procrastination Cure* a second time, commit to breaking the procrastination habit. Make a personal pledge to apply every tactic I've recommended. I'm confident you'll notice marked change in your tendency to procrastinate within a few weeks. You'll also notice that taking action will make you feel more empowered. Over the course of a few months, you'll start to look forward to tackling tasks and projects that once filled you with dread.

Introduction

Lying, is perhaps the simplest tactic mental manipulators like to use on their prey. The simple reason is that lying is fairly easy to accomplish and does not require much skill. Truthfully their real reason for lying tends to be to hide information that would damage them or become a barrier to their goals. Because if they did something bad. Well, they're not going to want you to know about it. As while manipulators love to be charming. The thing they love above all else is maintaining appearances. So, if they can keep the appearance that they are a good person through deceit then they most certainly will. We encounter liars every day in our life but, often, fail to realize they are telling us falsehoods. Detecting a liar can be difficult, as some people have mastered the craft of spewing falsehoods, so you're not going to be looking for overt signs like nervousness, scratching their nose, etc.

You want to look for patterns of untruthful behavior that you can notice and from there, you're able to slowly build up this pattern as a log in your mind, use that to your advantage. Sadly, the truth is that you have a very high likelihood of detecting a liar in a romantic relationship than you do say the nine to five workplaces.

This is because during a romantic relationship emotion is high, therefore this places the emotional stakes higher. This, in turn, means that someone who would do something that crosses these emotional stakes is willing to do whatever required to not get caught. A liar in a relationship will probably take the form of a partner who is never home but always has some elaborate excuse for why they're absent. Also, they may try to quickly divert the conversation from the matter at hand when asked where or what they're doing. Defusing a liar through thought is easy enough, but you must be persistent and firm in your belief of the truth.

Do not falter the manipulator will try and get you to become convinced that it is, in fact, you who is wrong and not them, that your version of the truth is the real lie. Remember though if someone is innocent, they will not protest their innocence and will trust you. Simply put, think of the old saying that if you have nothing to hide, then you have nothing to fear.

Tying well into lying as a manipulation tactic, some people will spin the truth to make themselves look like the victim or to allow blame

to be placed on you. This kind of manipulation tends to just be called playing the victim and spin.

Most of us commonly associate the idea of spinning the truth with news and politics. But the truth is cover manipulators will do that whenever they can. The partner who is always absent and always seems to have a convenient explanation for them not being present. At times when confronted with this information, they will try and pin it on you by claiming you must be insecure in the relationship and how it has to be you who is jealous since you're so suspicious of them. This covert manipulation tactic works by preying on our own emotions and getting us to question them. Getting us to look at our feelings and actions with distrust allows the manipulator to convince us that we must be the crazy ones, we must be the manipulators. In simple terms spinning the truth works by trying to downplay whatever someone is being accused of in hopes that you will believe and trust them.

Flattery will Get You Everywhere

Moving on from lying and deceit I would like to discuss one of the more effective methods of manipulation and that is flattery. Flattery is an idea we think of when the thought of relationships come to mind. The husband and wife out to dinner joyfully juking and jiving with each other. Or someone at a bar trying to pick up a girl. On the surface that is technically flattery as in its simplest terms, flattery just defines a behavior where someone goes out of their way to give platitudes to you regardless if their truthful or not. Because of how flattery can make us feel good about ourselves, it can be challenging to view it as something manipulative or bad. And the strange truth is that flattery or outright being a kiss-up is not always a bad thing if you want to get ahead in something. As mentioned, prior this is especially true if you are trying to woo a girl.

To be honest flattery in its milder form is one of the integral parts of our whole courting process as humans. Flattery used well in the workforce, for example, can be extremely advantageous for the person doing it. As it allows them to try and endear themselves to their boss or other co-workers. In doing this they will gain those individuals' trust allowing them more upward movement within the company.

The issue with flattery is that it can be used to create relationships on false pretenses, i.e. it lures someone into a false sense of security about how someone views them. Trust like this that is easily generated is always something you should be cautious about. For example, you start dating a man and he is overly flirtatious and goes seemingly too far to make you feel good then perhaps consider that maybe his intentions are not quite pure. The line between flattery and genuine true compliments lies first in you knowing yourself and your self-worth. If you are a strong confident person then you will know if someone is trying to compliment you in a way that seems to both try too hard and also be untrue.

So, remember generally flattery is not always a bad thing but it can be a segue for someone into getting you to give them a false sense of trust which is not always the best. Remembering this and what kind of behavior to look for will help you avoid being a victim of a manipulator in the future. As the line between simple flattery to be friendly and flattery for malice has a fine line, just as anything does.

Remember – Manipulation isn't Necessarily Bad

Not all manipulation has to be used for bad purposes. Some forms of manipulation we encounter regularly such as advertising and mass media. It can be used for good, so much so that they can make someone a profit. Or they can be used in the corporate world to climb up the ladder of hierarchy. In simple terms at times, it can be required that you grease some palms and perhaps act a certain way to get ahead.

Using manipulation techniques such as bending the truth or flattery may be required here to give you an advantage over the competition. In this case, it could be argued that it can be morally permitted due to the honest fact that if you don't try to push your way into these positions someone else will. At this point you are only playing the game everyone else is playing so by going out of your way to being friendly to your boss or bending the truth in how you present your accomplishments. Yes, you are using manipulation by giving your boss the impression an assignment you just completed may be better than it really might be.

Is that form of manipulation so bad? All you are doing is simply leveling the playing field. This type of behavior is less manipulation

and more in line with the idea of being persuasive or charismatic.

The difference here is you are using charm and ingratiation to convince someone further toward your line of thinking regardless of what that may be. It is still them making the decision in the end, all your doing is guiding and influencing them. This is far different from coercion where you are using subtle threats and fear to get what you want. An example of this type of coercion would be lying to your boss about the performance of another coworker to put them down and allow you to get a position that they currently hold.

Now that you understand manipulation from a moral aspect let me explain how you can use it yourself. I am sure we have all been at home watching the television when a flashy add with cool music comes on and it catches our attention. But did you ever stop to realize that those ads are designed purposely like that to draw and suck you in? Pay attention next time you walk down the supermarket at how so many different items have such colorful and unique packaging, it's all done on purpose to draw you in and make the item you may or may not purchase all the more enticing.

Marketing and Manipulation

For simplicity sake, think of the mass marketing campaign for popular consumer electronics like the I-phone. Apple the company that produces the I-phone will release a new one every year that is not all that different from the one they released a year prior. The way they do this is first by hosting these big insider conferences and then allowing in only a few select journalists.

On the surface, this may just seem like perfectly normal industry practice done to perhaps protect job secrets. But the opposite is, in fact, true, by making access to this new product seem exclusive and hidden they are then able to get people interested in it simply because people will always gravitate to what is mysterious and new.

Speaking of new the main tactic most companies like to rely on for sales is a psychological phenomenon called the “fear of missing out” simply put all this means is that, you a potential customer are more likely to purchase a product because it is new. In your mind, if you do not purchase the new fancy phone you have somehow fallen behind the social curve and are now missing out on something

exclusive that all the cool people own.

This form of manipulation relies heavily on spinning the truth by the fact, that while, yes, the new product they are selling is slightly more advanced than the prior it really is not all that new, and the accompanying excitement around it is somewhat synthetic and not perhaps a natural occurrence.

So how can you use this tactic for yourself, well the best place this kind of covert manipulation works is the business world. Especially if you are in a sales-driven business. When trying to sell a service or good people tend to only focus on what said service or good offers, not so much ring home how much it can benefit a potential customer.

This may sound like common sense but in plain terms play up and ingratiate yourself to your customer base, let them know how lucky they are for looking into your product and how if they purchase the product they will be amongst some exclusive group. In these kinds of instances, you are not really harming the customer as you are persuading them to your side of the aisle. By making them feel good about this potential purchase they, in turn, leave feeling validating and like they have perhaps earned something useful in their life.

While you the salesperson has just sold a said product to the customer, therefore, increasing your profit and meeting your requirements. Moving away from the idea of selling something, you can use this type of manipulation in your personal life to meet new and interesting people. Put on an air that you are someone unique, cool or special when you are acting with someone. They will pick up on this and it will translate into the appearance of confidence, in short sell yourself, why should they be friends with you, what do you bring to the table.

These are all the things you can covertly show by how you make yourself appear to them. By using flattery and charm while also being integral you make both you and the people your meeting feel good something that is rarely a bad thing. Some people will call this charm the truth is that this a form of manipulation.

Now that you are aware of these kinds of sales tricks you are now armed to defend against them. But how do you defeat something that plays on basic instinct?

Manipulation and Basic Instinct

Well, the answer lies in your basic instinct. Confidence brings with it the appearance of charm by putting on a confident mask you can get a potential manipulator into thinking that you are a hard target to hit. Think of the common image of the used car salesperson an individual who will try to sweet talk an individual into an overpriced purchase even though they know the person can't afford it.

They prey on people they can tell are not going to call them out on their behavior. This stereotype exists for a reason, it is because it is somewhat true if you present yourself as weak and powerless people will pick up on that. Recognizing that confidence is needed is only one step in the battle against manipulation.

The second is using a bit of common sense and taking a step back and thinking. If something someone is telling you seems too good to be true, then do not just take it at face value. Start by considering the context of the situation and what could motivate someone to be untruthful or manipulative in a situation. What if someone is cheating in a relationship? They may be willing to lie and be dishonest to keep that relationship going. Or, if someone is trying to sell you something then they have the incentive to lie in that context because their livelihood most likely depends on how many of a good or service, they can sell someone. Knowing this context allows you to look at what your being told as a piece of a much larger picture instead of just an isolated occurrence.

Trust and Manipulation

Without trust, nothing can be gained either in business or in personal affairs. You can gain this trust in a variety of ways, but you first want to begin by presenting yourself as trustworthy, because if you were not then why would someone want to pay attention to you.

Knowing now how commonplace manipulation is, and how it can occur from your house down to the sales floor. It allows you to defend yourself against manipulation which could harm you and stop you from accomplishing your goals. While also allowing you to use some of the tricks lightly to attain your own.

Simply put using your enemies' weapons against them is your best approach to defeating them, there's nothing wrong with trying to be overly friendly and flattering to someone. It makes them feel good

about themselves and gives you companionship. This same moral attitude can be taken with business.

Think of it this way, if you can get the customer convinced that what they are about to purchase will benefit their lives in some way or the other then you have fulfilled a need of theirs. They will always go to someone searching to fill that need regardless of what it may be, so why shouldn't it be you who fills that need? Finally, you then gain something from a job well done, because you understood these tactics. By fulfilling two needs through one act you could argue that using these manipulation tactics for good could be better than using normal behavior to accomplish a goal. On the other hand, you may sometimes find yourself in situations that require you to use manipulation for survival or to even just get a meal.

In conclusion, I will always remember the context of the situation you are in before you do anything regarding manipulation. By knowing how to navigate using these techniques effectively you can go far with them. As opposed to being in a situation you are unsure of and trying to apply manipulation tactics.

One of the most important components of manipulation is of course confidence. If you are not confident in what you are doing, then why should anyone else have confidence in what you are saying?

It may seem difficult to try and be confident when you know you are being somewhat deceitful.

To try and avoid this think of it as an actor would. In short look at what you are about to do and engage in as a performance of sorts. Convince yourself first of what you are saying. Now, this does not mean that you have to wholeheartedly believe every word coming out of your mouth.

But what it does mean is that you need to create the appearance that you believe what you are saying. This is the same tactic that politicians like to use when trying to get elected, they try and seem personable, and like an everyday joe. Remember this when you are trying to use manipulation tactics to your benefit. Because if you do you will be amazed at how well it goes and how much you can convince someone of.

Chapter 55. Nlp

Have you ever gone through the effort of trying to communicate with someone else that does not speak the same language as you? Perhaps you speak English, and the other person speaks Chinese. The person speaking Chinese is desperately gesturing for something, but you are entirely unsure what it is that they need. They gesture frantically, but you never figure it out. You make many guesses—you offer a phone, and they shake their head. You offer water, and they shake their head. No matter what you offer, the other person becomes more and more annoyed or frustrated because he or she cannot get through to you. Eventually, the other person storms off without having ever gotten whatever it is that he needed and you are left wondering what it was that was so desperately needed in the first place.

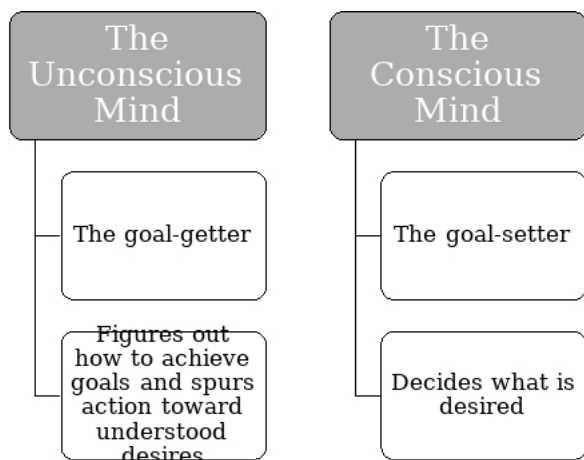
Now, imagine that same exchange, but you are both the English and Chinese speaker—one half of you only speaks in English while the other desperately tries to communicate in Chinese. Neither side is able to communicate with the other, and both end up disjointed, frustrated, and without any proper communication. This is actually what does happen in your mind. Your conscious mind thinks in one way, and the unconscious mind thinks entirely differently. You may want to be setting up a life to be happy and successful, but in reality, your unconscious has never received the message. As a result, you find that your unconscious continuously sabotages you. Your emotions do not line up with your goals. Your body language does not fit. You simply run into complication after complication, despite the fact that you know what you want.

Keep in mind that your unconscious mind is not meant to be your adversary. It is not something that needs to be tamed or controlled. Rather, it is something to harness and work within tandem. However, this means that you need to learn to communicate with it appropriately. If you can figure out the right way to communicate with that unconscious part of yourself, you *can* get it lined up with your conscious desires and expectations. You *can* get it to help you achieve your goals. It is not a matter of your unconscious being out to get you or subvert your attempts to happiness; it is a matter of you do not know how best to communicate with your unconscious

mind to get what you want.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming

This is where neuro-linguistic programming comes in. NLP is designed to help you facilitate getting the results that you want and need. It helps you figure out how best to act in ways that are conducive to your success. Those who practice NLP say that the unconscious mind is what drives you to achieve your goals, so long as you are able to communicate those goals effectively. NLP recognizes that both the conscious and unconscious minds are important and serve their own roles.



NLP helps to bridge that gap between the two, acting as a sort of translator, so your conscious desires are communicated to the unconscious mind in order to ensure that your mind works together rather than against each other. By working together, you will find that you are far more likely to see your desired results simply because you are not running into the problem of having the two parts of your mind clash.

Effectively, neuro-linguistic processing is a method of learning to communicate with the unconscious. You are learning to become fluent in your unconscious mind's method of communication so you can finally tell it what you want. It allows for that communication with yourself, but also facilitates the communication with others as well. This means that you can use the processes learned during the practice of NLP to also communicate with the unconscious minds of

others as well. You can implant thoughts, facilitate behaviors, and encourage changes in lifestyles all by learning how to tap into the unconscious minds of others.

While this may sound manipulative, you actually see people paying others to give them the NLP treatment. People will pay practitioners to help them overcome phobias or bad habits. People can be taught to overcome emotions, create new coping methods, and more all by interacting with someone fluent in NLP.

For example, imagine that you have severe anxiety because, as a child, you went up to present something, but you really needed to use the bathroom. You could not go before the presentation, and as you gave it, you accidentally had an accident. Everyone laughed at you, and ever since, you have been terrified of ever getting involved in presentations. Being in front of a crowd became something that you could not possibly bring yourself to do. You failed several assignments all through school because you simply would refuse to present. You would do the work, but you would not go up to present it.

Obviously, there are plenty of job choices during which you would never have to be in front of a crowd, but if you happened to choose a job that would regularly put you in front of people to deliver reports, you may find that you struggle. You know that you are not a child anymore and that realistically, you would not be wetting yourself again any time soon, but you cannot get over that feeling of being laughed at and horrified.

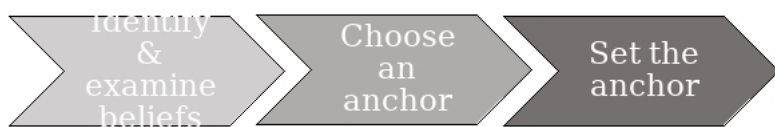
As a solution, you may have spoken to an NLP practitioner. The practitioner would have access to several tools that could help you process that trauma in order to get past it. You could reframe the situation, learning to laugh at it instead of feeling traumatized. You could learn to create anchors that will have you begin to feel an entirely different feeling when you go up to present. No matter the method, there are several tools that can be used to help you get over that trauma.

This is just one example of a time that NLP can be used to benefit. However, it can also be used in ways that are harmful. Manipulators love the tools of NLP because they grant access to the unconscious mind. The manipulator can use NLP techniques to create tendencies to obey almost mindlessly. They can create

tendencies to give the manipulator exactly what he or she wants. The manipulator will be able to communicate with the unconscious mind without ever tripping the alarms of the conscious mind. Effectively, the manipulator is able to completely bypass the conscious and tell the unconscious exactly what is expected—and the unconscious will comply. Without any clear way to communicate, the individual will be left frustrated, wondering why they keep behaving the way that they are with no clear answer.

The Keys to NLP

For NLP to be effective, there are a few steps that need to be followed. These are the keys to NLP that will help you figure out how to access the mind. At this point, you are being shown a brief overview of what needs to happen. There are techniques that will more or less use these steps on their own and other steps that will seek to change things up a bit. However, at the heart of things, these must happen. These three steps, the keys to being able to practice NLP, are being able to examine and identify beliefs, choosing an appropriate anchor, and then setting that anchor in an efficient manner.



If you can master these three simple steps, you will find that the more specific techniques seem to fall into place with ease. You will be able to convince people to do almost anything, simply by knowing how to get into the other person's mind. This is a strategic endeavor, but once you are able to follow that strategy, you will find that the control that you can exert over both yourself and

others around you is far more than you had access to ever before. You will become the master over your own behavior, while also having the power and access to other people to be a master over them as well. You can effectively use these NLP techniques and strategies to figure out how best to win the long game.

Examine beliefs

First, you are figuring out the information at hand. This is where you start to piece together what you or the other person think or feel surrounding a certain event or situation. You may find that the other person is highly anxious about socializing and being in front of crowds. When in front of a crowd, they tend to melt down and freak out. You know this and acknowledge it.

You will be examining beliefs to figure out why that is felt. In this case, it may link back to that one incident of wetting herself in front of a crowd and then being mortified any time she is under public scrutiny.

If you are attempting to use NLP on yourself, which is a valid technique that many people will use, you may take this time to identify the emotion that you have that you wish was not problematic. You may figure out that you tend to feel angry during certain situations, and because of that anger, you struggle to really communicate with other people effectively. That lack of communication usually has the unfortunate result of causing problems in your relationships.

As you identify those feelings, you will find that you can figure out where the problem lies. In figuring them out, you can start to figure out how best to target and destroy them. In NLP, this process usually involves the use of anchors—points that are directly related to a certain event or feeling. An anchor for your stress, for example, maybe you bite your nails out of habit, but after a lifetime of biting your nails when stress, just the act of absently biting your nails can make your anxiety begin to flare up.

Choose an anchor

Knowing that you will be under the influence of several anchors already, certain situations or actions that cause you to feel a certain emotion, it is time to figure out which anchors and emotions you can use to overcome the problem. If you know that you have an

anger issue, you may go through the effort of learning how to combat that anger issue through triggering new emotions instead. Whenever you would feel yourself getting angry, then you would make sure that you trigger your anchor, and that would then cause you to feel something else.

Effectively, if you are familiar with basic psychology, you are conditioning yourself. You are effectively training yourself to act a certain way in response to certain situations, and in doing so, you are able to make sure that you can overcome the negative feelings that have been holding you down. If you have bad habits in relation to your emotions, you can begin to counter them. You can figure out how to create new, healthier habits that trigger you to behave in new, healthier ways. You can figure out how best to protect yourself from your negative emotions so you can heal and move on in life.

Your new anchor can be just about anything. You could use an affirmation or word that you repeat to yourself to help keep yourself under control. It could be a movement or an action that you use to remind yourself to stay under control, such as snapping your wrist with a rubber band whenever you find that your anger is getting out of hand. It could be a scent that makes you feel secure. It can even be a certain thought or memory that you return to during times of distress.

When you choose an anchor, you want to make sure that it is something that you can regularly access for maximum impact. You may be best served with a short phrase that you use or a motion of your hands. That is something that you can do subtly and at any point in time.

Set an anchor

Finally, you must figure out how to set your anchor. This is where you see the most deviation in your behaviors and techniques. There are several different methods that can be used in order to set a good anchor point for you or for those around you, and how you decide to do so will largely be dependent upon what you are hoping to do and how you are dealing with. You may choose to use visualization if you are working with someone intentionally, with the other person knowing what you are doing. You may choose to use something more along the lines of mirroring and subtle mimicry

and emotional triggers if you want to be entirely unnoticed. You may choose to do something like intentionally reframing a memory from negative and traumatic into something funny if you want to change your own way of thinking and your own emotional reaction. Ultimately, the method that you choose will largely be subject to who you are attempting to persuade and how you want to go about it.

If you want to make it a point to, for example, persuade a stranger to buy something that you want them to, you may make it a point to trigger a mirroring relationship—do not worry if you do not know how to do this. From there, you can subtly influence him to nod his head by nodding your own head, making the other person's mindset far more likely to be agreeable, and leading to the other person being influenced to nod along with you without ever realizing that you had influenced and encouraged that decision.

Whether you want to control yourself or someone else, you always want to choose an anchor that is simple and easily implemented, but not so common that it will be randomly triggered by strangers during the course of the day. While you probably could trigger someone to make a certain face every time you do a very specific and common movement, such as giving a thumbs up, it would not be particularly kind or ethical to do so. You would be triggering the other person in a way that will likely be distracting and problematic. After all, no one wants to be grimaced at every time they give a thumbs up to someone else.

Chapter 56. Body Language

Body language points to the nonverbal cues that us as humans use to have effective communication with each other. Such nonverbal signals, according to scholars, constitute a major part of daily interaction. The stuff we do not say can still transmit amounts of knowledge from our body language to our physical movements. It has also been reported that body language can account for about 60 percent and 65 percent of all communication. It is necessary to understand body language, and it is also vital to pay close attention to other signals such as meaning. In many situations, instead of relying on a single event, you must look at signals as a band. When you learn and master how to use body language for effective communication, you will also be able to manipulate individuals psychologically in a positive manner.

What Is Body Language?

Even when they don't express their opinions verbally, the majority still miss clues about what they think and feel. Non-verbal signals communicated through the formation of the sender's body, physical appearance, voice inflections and intensity of the voice, and various signs are all referred to as non-verbal communication.

Non-verbal communication is usually not as simple as it is conveyed in words, but how it is expressed could take on a major job by recognizing somebody and interfacing with others. It's a quiet ensemble: mini-expressions (short presentations of feeling that individual attempts to disguise), hand gestures, and the recording of posture in the human mind very rapidly in any event, when someone is not consciously aware of them.

These acknowledgment snapshots, however short, can have lasting repercussions on how an individual translates the inspiration, disposition, and receptivity of others as well as how they see their own inner identity. Regrettably, certain psychological well-being issues, particularly neuropsychiatric issues such as mental defect, may make it, even more, trying to test to recognize and respond to non-verbal communication messages.

Types of Body Language

There are types of body language. This is because we cannot classify

the different styles in the same category. Different body languages can be distinguished. So, which body language styles can be differentiated? Generally, the body language is divided into two columns. That includes; Body parts and the Intent

So what kinds in each class can be observed?

Let us start with the body parts and the language they communicate.

- The Head - The placement of the head and its movement, back and forth, right to left, side to side, including the shake of hair.
- Face - This includes facial expressions. You should note that the face has many muscles ranging from 54 and 98 whose work is to move different areas of the face. The movements of the face depict the state of your mind.
- Eyebrows - The eyebrows can express themselves through moving up and down, as well as giving a frown
- Eyes - The eyes can be rolled, move up down, right, and left, blink as well as the dilatation
- The Nose - The expression of the nose can be by the flaring of the nostrils and the formation of wrinkles at the top
- The Lips - There are many roles played by the lips, that include snarling, smiling, kissing, opened, closed, tight, and puckering
- The Tongue - The tongue can roll in and out, go up and down, touch while kissing, and also the licking of lips
- The Jaw - The jaw opens and closes, it can be clinched and also the lower jaw can be moved right and left
- Your Body Posture - This describes the way you place your body, legs, and arms connected, and also concerning other people
- The Body Proximity - This looks at how far your body

is to other people

- Shoulder Movements - They move up and down, get hunched, and hang
- The Arm - These go up down, straight and crossed

Legs and the feet-these can have an expression in many different ways. They can be straight, crossed, legs placed one over the other, the feet can face the next person you are in a conversation with, they can face away from each other, the feet can be dangling the shoes

The hand and the fingers-the way that your hands and fingers move is powerful in reading other people's gestures. The hands can move up and down, they can do some hidden language that only people of the same group can understand.

How one reacts to handling and placing of objects-this is not regarded as a body part but it technically plays a role in reading a body language. This may predict anger, happiness and much more.

This includes willingly making body movements otherwise known as gestures. These are the movements that you intended to make for example shaking of hands, blinking your eyes, moving, and shaking your body in a sexy way maybe to lure someone and much more. There are also involuntary movements-this are movements that you have no control over. This can be sweating, laughter, crying and much more.

Importance of Body Language

Most individuals rely on social networks and texts to connect in the modern digital age, and this is a very reliable way for doing so.

While digital communication enables people to speak at convenience and can reduce stress on certain individuals, something can be lost in so doing, and because you are incapable of recognizing the person when you speak to them, you can miss key non-verbal signs in addition to verbal ones such as vocal inflections. Digital communication has become the main method for people around the world, and to satisfy this, there is the likelihood that body language will proceed to develop. Most of the time you may hear the negatives of body language. Maybe you are told not to twist in a certain way, sit this way or that way. However, body language can influence your life positively. Let us look at what you

should do to maximize body language.

How Body Language Can Influence Effective Communication

While we may feel and wish that interaction is as easy as the phrases that we say, it is not the truth. The reality is that our message is heard more than just our words. If in an email, text, or instant message you've ever been mistaken, you know what I'm talking about. Words alone are not enough. The body language is part of what strengthens and wraps up the message and if individuals see us may be face-to-face or using video cameras, our body language influences our message and presentation. You may find that body language helps the receiver of information read your mind and interpret your thoughts. Acknowledge that there's more to the message that you're sending, there's the meta-message of who you're and the intention to send that message. Body language is constantly communicating to your audience.

My aim in this is to offer you some specific advice to help your communication in the body language that you use and to increase the chances that your message will be heard and understood properly.

Always Make Eye Contact

It is first on the list, without a doubt. You will be surprised to note that, our eyes talk more on our behalf. However, this is prone to some cultural differences. We develop confidence in what we say and believe the other individual once we make eye contact. Our eyes may be the portals to our soul, but they are certainly a way to develop a relationship and provide effective communication. You may say that you are shy and unable to make eye contact most of the time. Well, the shyness may cause you to look down or sideways while communicating. Your audience may interpret this as a lack of confidence in your message. I would advise you to nurture your eye contact. The good thing about body language is that you can learn it with time. Purpose To develop the skills step by step.

Walk Energetically

Picture the first time you meet anyone. In a sluggish posture, they come to you, ambling towards you. Picture the same scenario now with an individual walking with intent and power—we're not thinking about sprinting, but a deliberate walk. This mere act is the

individual's opinion, isn't it? Our walking style sends out a message of trust and authenticity and also beauty. When you walk in confidence, you depict that you know what you are up to and believe in yourself. You know what happens next, people will be able to believe in you too.

Bring Out a Reflection

Our feelings and considerations appear through our non-verbal communication which is the purpose of this article. When you need to discuss better with others, consider reflecting their non-verbal communication. This isn't a YouTube snapshot of an infant emulating another person, the fact of the matter isn't to copy or ridicule somebody, yet rather to show sympathy through your non-verbal communication. This must be inconspicuous and will take practice, however, it can enable your messages to be gotten all the more effectively by others.

Give Individuals a Chance to See Their Hands

We as a whole utilize our hands to convey a message. You can even watch individuals on the telephone, when the other individual can't in any way, shape or see them, utilizing their hands to present their meaningful conclusion! At the point when individuals can't see our hands, they wonder on the off chance that we are concealing something, if we are anxious, and maybe numerous different things. Your hands are a piece of your effective communication; so, use them and maintain a strategic distance from any negatives that may originate from concealing them from others.

Utilize Empowering Non-Verbal Communication

Two quick models: eye to eye connection is referenced as of now, and gesturing with individuals to show that you comprehend and additionally concur. When somebody does that it conveys capably to you, isn't that right? This isn't the main model. Identified with reflecting over, this is utilizing our body development and motions to show individuals we give it a second thought and need to tune in to and gain from them and that what we are sharing is to their greatest advantage as well.

Slow Down

A few of us speed up our communication. It is advisable to slow down, however, it hinders your signals and development. While

some speed conveys vitality, there is an almost negligible difference that we cross that leads our non-verbal communication to show tension, apprehension, or even contemptibility. Take a full breath and relax a little bit.

Have an Incredible Handshake

If you have one, you realize how significant this is. If you are unconscious of this reality, you might just have a limp, dead fish, or overwhelming and over-controlling handshake. A handshake communicates something specific about what your identity is. Work on a firm and welcoming handshake and you will impart believability and certainty to other people.

While we as a whole can and should deal with these things, perceive that the beneficiary of our message, the watcher of our non-verbal communication is the judge. Their view of our non-verbal communication runs the day. At the point when we apply the thoughts above however, we will improve the odds that their discernment is certain and will bolster better correspondences and connections.

Here Are More Powerful Tips and Their Relevance in Communication

To enhance your confidence, undertake the power pose

Research shows that actually holding your body in broad, high-powered poses that involve leaning back with your arms behind your feet and head up on your chair, or standing with your arms and legs wide open for as little as two minutes promotes higher levels of testosterone a hormone connected to dominance and power. Do this when you 're getting nervous but want to look confident. Such positions, in addition to triggering hormonal changes in both males and females, lead to increased emotions of dominance and higher risk perception.

Act like You're Listening to Encourage Participation

If you want your audience to take action, don't multitask while they're doing it. Do not be tempted to check your SMS messages, to check the time, or see how the other members respond. Alternatively, by moving your head and body to face them directly and making eye contact, you can concentrate on those who are speaking. Leaning forward, nodding, and rotating your head are

other ways to demonstrate your commitment and attention through body language. Hearing people is essential. Being sure they understand your attentive is just as critical.

Get Rid of Barriers to Have a Connection

To promote cooperation, remove everything that prevents your vision or creates a wall for both you and the rest of the group. Even as you take a breather, be mindful that by keeping your teacup in a style that seems to shield your body intentionally or separate you from everyone else, you can form a barrier. A senior executive once observed that the higher they kept their coffee cups, he could determine the satisfaction of his staff. To rate the nervousness of the individuals, they tend to hold their coffee cups at a high position. People held at waist level with their hands were more relaxed than those with high chest arms.

Shake Hands to Build a Connection

The act of touch has been regarded as the most powerful non-verbal cue to create a great connection with people... Touching others with as little as a few seconds on the arm, side, or shoulder establishes a human internal connection. Looking at the workplace, through the handshake tradition, bodily touch and comfort are developed, and this tactile contact gives a lasting and positive feeling. Handshake research showed that if you shook hands with people, you are twice as likely to remember them after you leave. Research has shown that people are more open and friendly to the people they come into contact with and shake hands.

Smile to Stimulate Good Feelings

A genuine smile not only triggers your sense of well-being, but it also tells those around you that you are accessible, supportive, and reliable. A real smile slowly emerges, crinkles the eyes, and widens the lips, shines up the face, and slowly fades away. Most significantly, a smile has a direct impact on how others relate to you. You may have noticed that when you smile at someone they respond with a smile. Facial expressions have a way of triggering more feelings associated with the smile. When you get back a smile, it transforms the emotional state of the other person in post-trigger corresponding feelings, the smile that you get back actually changes the emotional state of that person positively.

When in Agreement, Always Show Through Expressions and the

Posture

When clients or business partners unintentionally mimic your body language, it is their way of stating how much they like or comply with you in a non-verbal manner. It can be an essential part of developing relationships and fostering shared sentiments when you mirror other individuals with purpose. Mirroring begins by examining the gestures of a person's face and body and then allowing your body to take on similar statements and poses consciously. The other person will feel recognized and welcomed to do so.

Always Watch People's Feet if You Want to Learn the Truth

As individuals try to regulate their expression of the body, they focus mainly on facial expressions, postures of the body, and movements of the hand/arm. Because the feet and the legs have not been rehearsed, they are where all the reality can be identified commonly. By enhanced foot motions, individuals will often show anxiety and discomfort while undergoing any form of stress. The feet will always fidget together around the seat. The Feet can spread and curl to ease tension, and even jump out to flee in a remotely controlled effort. Studies have found that viewers are more effective in determining the real emotional state of an individual as they see the whole body. Maybe you don't know, but you have been reacting to feet gestures all of your life.

Keep Your Voice Down to Command Authority

As you plan to make or receive a call or else a speech, you should let your voice relax into its optimal pitch. You will achieve this by putting your lips together and make the voices of 'um, um hum'. Also, take note that your voice does not go so high at the ends of the sentences. It may be confused with asking questions or trying to seek approval. To counter this, if you want to state an opinion use the authoritative pitch that starts with a low note and raises the voice throughout the sentence and the voice goes down towards the end. When you adopt this, you will be able to take control and command authority in each space.

Don't Cross Your Legs, You Will Enhance Your Memory

According to a study, people in a lecture room who had unfolded legs and arms recorded a higher memory of more than 35 percent compared to those who had crossed them. Therefore, to enhance

your retention of information, you should unfold your arms and legs. If you are making a presentation and note these characteristics among your audience, change your strategy and do something that will enhance their listening. You could take a break and make sure that you see a change happen by making them open and loosen up for concentration.

Chapter 57. Subliminal Persuasion

Subliminal persuasion is the technique of convincing your target, or your group of targets, to do something, without them knowing. There isn't going to be any outward suggesting of the idea, and often the victim isn't going to realize that you were trying to influence them at all. It is one of the types of persuasion that manipulators and others can use, and it uses words, along with some gestures, to get ahold of different people. So, you may find things like smiling, use of the head, eye expression, and more being used, both in a positive and a negative manner. It is a powerful technique, but often a difficult technique, that not only uses words, but uses the meaning behind the words, and body language, to ensure that the victim does what the manipulator wants.

In the modern world, the techniques that are used for subliminal persuasion are going to be powerful weapons that can really help you get ahead. They can help you to manipulate others, or even gain an advantage in a market where there is a lot of competition, and you need to stay ahead of the game. According to some experts in the field of marketing and persuasion, many people are resulting in subliminal advertising because it is more effective. As they say, "Persuasion that looks like persuasion isn't persuasive anymore."

Even a manipulator can use this information to help them take control of the victim. If the persuasion that they use is too obvious, then the victim is just going to walk away. You see a lot of examples of persuasion in your daily lives that it is easy to recognize the more obvious signs and stay away from them if you don't want to purchase something or do something.

If a manipulator comes at their victim with a big sales pitch, lots of bright flashing lights, and other obvious techniques of persuasion, then they will get nowhere. The victim is smart enough to recognize these signs, and they will get away from the manipulator, and this is where subliminal persuasion can come in.

Every time that the manipulator communicates with their victim, they are going to be very careful about the nonverbal signs that they are sending out as well. The manipulator is going to try and send out extra messages and extra persuasion through the body language and the nonverbal cues that he/she is sending out as well.

Since subliminal persuasion is going to deal with the feelings that the victim has, there is going to be some kind of subconscious element in this kind of persuasion. As a manipulator or another kind of person who needs to use persuasion, you will provide the victim's mind with some feelings of enthusiasm and comfort about doing a given task. Those thoughts and emotions are going to be sent out to the subconscious mind, but then you have to take to the logical mind too. You can then talk to this part of the mind by discussing the things that are rational about the choice.

Some subliminal factors are going to influence whether the manipulator is going to be believable. For instance, the way that the manipulator does dress is going to be a factor. The manipulator is going to make sure that the victim sees him/her at his/her very best. The manipulator will dress nicely, make sure that his/her appearance is kept up, and always look like he/she is doing well. Even when the manipulators are trying to play the victim and say that they are hurt or dealing with a big illness, your manipulator will still dress nice.

You are programmed to be more likely to help out someone with a nice appearance, someone who is well-groomed, compared to someone who is not. If the manipulator wants to exploit this factor, then they are going to take some extra precautions with their appearance.

There can also be a level of subliminal persuasion that is used in the language of the manipulator as they ask for a favor. There is a lot of truth in the idea of "it's not what you say, but how you say it." The manipulator isn't going to say anything that is too out there, because this is something that may raise some flags with their victim. But the way they use their words will make a difference, and usually gets them what they want.

The way that the manipulator will use their inflections and intonations will also have a large bearing on the meaning of what you say. If you see a sentence like "I can't promise you that price," you may assume that it has just one meaning, and that is it. But depending on the way that the manipulator, or salesperson, uses it, there may be a few different meanings. Take a look at some of the examples below:

- I can't promise YOU that price. This one is going to infer that

the manipulator isn't willing to get you that price, but maybe they will promise that price to someone else.

- I can't promise you that price. This one can infer that one person can't do it, but maybe there is someone else who can offer that price.
- I CANNOT promise you that price. This one is going to infer that there is just no way that the person is going to get that price.
- I can't PROMISE you that price. This one is going to infer that there isn't a guarantee but that the manipulator might be able to do them a "favor" and get that price.
- I can't promise you THAT price. This one infers that the manipulator is going to see what they can do. They may not be able to offer exactly that, but they could still get you something good.
- I can't promise you that PRICE. This one is going to infer that they will still be able to promise you something, even if the price point doesn't fall in the desired spot.

The importance of these statements is a great way to utilize the ideas of subliminal persuasion. And there can be so many different meanings based on the words that the manipulator, or any other person, decides to emphasize. And it is sometimes such a subtle process, that you can hear the sentence and infer the meaning, without even realizing what is going on.

Think about the intonation that you can use when you say a specific sentence, and then imagine the power that goes behind those words based on what a manipulator would be able to use with them as well. In fact, there are about three choices that come with intonation and the way that it can change up the meaning of the whole sentence. As you go through and say something, the three ways to finish up that sentence would include:

- An intonation that goes up
- A downward, which would mean that the intonation is a deeper voice
- A voice intonation that does not change at all

Subliminal Persuasion Advertising

One aspect of subliminal persuasion that you need to take a look at with this topic referred to as subliminal advertising. This type of advertising aims to use your subconscious minds against you to profit from another company. The business is going to sneak different emotions, feelings, and thoughts into the things that you consume, in the hopes that you are going to want to purchase more of that same products. In some countries, the idea of subliminal advertising has been banned because it has been recognized how dangerous this kind of manipulation tactic can be against the consumer.

However, it is pretty common that an advertiser can get into the head of the consumer, and most of these advertisers are really good at doing it. They sometimes even pay to have potential consumers watch the advertisement to monitor how the brain functions while watching that commercial. This helps the advertisers to get a better idea of how the brain is going to work while watching the advertisement, and then they can make adjustments to really make it stronger.

The advertisers are going to monitor several things. For example, they may decide to track eye movement to see what part of the commercial is drawing the attention of the crowd more. The advertising company can then use this information to sell a product and to be as effective with the subliminal persuasion as possible. This shows just how powerful advertising can be, and how it has broken into your brains, understanding how to sell you something better than your understanding of capitalism, and what it means to be a consumer.

Think about a chocolate commercial for an example. The advertisement could just show a picture of a peanut butter cup. You see the logo, just for a second, but then there is nothing else on the screen that tells you to purchase that treat. However, this is enough to tell you about the candy bar, and the idea gets stuck in your head. This can make it more likely that you will purchase that same treatment when you head to the store next time.

Of course, you don't always give in to what we see in advertisements, even with subliminal persuasion. You see thousands of advertisements during the week, and of course, you are not going

out and purchasing thousands of items. But it is effective. Think about the reason that you do purchase some of the things that you own. Think about the reasons that you have a tone of stuff around the house that you never use. All of this could be due to the process of subliminal advertising and persuasion.

Different Ways of Being Subliminally Persuaded

Whether you feel comfortable with the idea or not, it is highly possible that you are subliminally persuaded in one way or another. For example, if someone has ever used a form of passive-aggressive behavior on you, then they have tried to use this kind of persuasion on you as well. For example, your mother could make a comment about how she saw someone at the store that she hadn't seen for some time, and then she makes a side comment about the weight of that person, in a certain tone.

The reason that the mother was doing this could be a subliminal message about how that mother feels about the weight of her daughter. The persuasion then is that the perception of that daughter is going to be altered. For example, the daughter may feel like she isn't meeting the standards of beauty that her mother has. And as a result, the daughter could try to alter her life, choosing to stay away from the mother to avoid these comments and not feel bad or try to work and lose weight if possible.

This is such a tricky tactic of persuasion, one of the hardest to fight off out of them all. Those who are using this kind of persuasion are often going to be so lost in their own personal delusions, ones that no one else is going to share, and they are never able to recover. Of course, they are never going to admit that they are using these manipulation tactics, and the victim will either need to remove themselves from the situation or be stuck in the cycle forever.

Asking for More

One method that someone who is a subliminal persuader will use to get something from others is to start out by asking for more than they really need in the end. Perhaps that person needs to have \$5000, but they know that is a big amount to ask someone for, especially right from the beginning. So, instead of starting with that amount, they are going to ask for one that is much higher. This is done to kind of shock the victim into thinking the lower amount is more reasonable, and they are more likely to give in to the request.

The person who was the victim of this subliminal persuasion may feel guilty at the end of this conversation because they weren't able to give more, and they weren't able to help out for the full amount. Even though that person already asked for something once, the manipulator can keep on coming back because their victim will feel like they hadn't given enough the first time. Or, since they helped in the past, they may feel obligated to keep up with this pattern and offer help again.

Doing Favors

Someone who is using subliminal persuasion on another person may first choose to ask for a favor. With manipulation, it is more of a demand or a blatant telling of what the victim needs to do. But the persuader will ask for the favor so that there is an illusion that they need some aid or help that only the victim can provide. The victim is going to feel like they should help out because they may have some kind of need to care for others, and they may feel good about themselves for doing a favor for someone else.

In some cases, the manipulator may do a favor for the other person first. This helps the victim feel like since they had gotten help first, they need to return the favor, and they become indebted to the manipulator. However, with subliminal persuasion, the manipulator is just going to cut to the chase and will focus on appearing like they need help with something.

Those who are the victim in these cases may feel like they are someone special just because they get the privilege of helping this other person out. They may feel good about themselves like they had some value because they were able to help someone else. Of course, the manipulator is the one in control of that situation, and they are taking advantage of the need to care in the victim to their advantage they will get what they wanted from the victim, even though the victim is going to feel good about doing the favor.

Being Flattered

Flattery can be great at this, but it is definitely something that can be used against the victim when the manipulator gets to work. The manipulator will believe that if they can build up their victim, and if they can make that victim feel good about themselves, then they can get what they want out of that person.

You can see how well flattery works when you watch young

children use this technique. Children often learn how to use flattery at an early age in an attempt to get people to do what they want. They already understand that using their charm can lead to a lot of happiness in other people, which will lead them to do things for the manipulator.

This is something that can occur in abuse, too. The abuser gets into a pattern of building up the significant other a bunch, and then later, when it works for them, they are going to tear this person down and be the one in control of the situation again.

You will find that people are much more willing to do something for the manipulator when there is flattery involved. The flattery, even if it is shallow or even if it is from someone we don't know well, makes us feel good. It makes us feel smarter, prettier, stronger, and more like.

Choosing the Appropriate Time to Ask for Something

Those who are going to be using subliminal persuasion are going to make sure that they calculate out the right time to ask for something. They won't just focus on who to go after as a victim. They are also going to put in some effort into deciding when it is the right time to ask the victim to help with the favor to make sure the answer is going to be a yes.

There are a lot of times when the manipulator can choose to ask you for a favor. But it will never be at a time when you are at your best. They won't ask you when you are having a good day, or when you are well-rested and happy or ready to think through the answers that you give. This is when normal people would ask because they want to get a good answer from you.

But remember that the manipulator just wants to get the answer that benefits them. And they often know that you will turn them down if you are alert enough to catch on to what they are asking for. This is why you must be careful about requests for favors or help when you are tired, or even times when you are in a good mood. The manipulator is going to spend some time looking for these times and then using them to their advantage when they ask you for some favors.

Someone who is trying to subliminally persuade you will also try to ask for favors when both of you are in public settings. They believe that this is going to give them the upper hand of the situation. They

like to do this because it can take away the chance for a confrontation that is going to be uncomfortable and unfavorable for them.

And that is why this kind of persuasion can be so difficult to detect in some cases. When the victim can help, they are going to feel good about themselves. They can see what the other person needs, and then will step in and offer to help in some way. They can feel good about themselves, and they can sometimes look good in front of the other people who are important to them, and the manipulator gets to leave with exactly what they wanted because the victim followed the plan.

Chapter 58. Dark Psychology

What is Dark Psychology?

Having Knowledge is the central point of the existence of a human being. One of the main reasons for us to evolve from primates and to become what we are today is the evolution of our mind yet the human mind is far much more complicated to understand. The potential of the human mind is still not known to us and with all the advanced technologies of the 21st century; scientists are still finding it very difficult to understand the capabilities and the potential of the human brain.

Having said the same thing I can say that someone knowing human psychology is far more powerful than the rest of us. Knowledge of psychology can be applied in every aspect of life. With the resources in our time getting fewer day by day and population increasing day by day, the tendency of human being preying over each other is increasing at a very high rate. Dark psychology is nothing but the study of the nature of human beings to prey upon each other. If you are unaware of all this then you must pay attention to what I am saying because anybody can take advantage of you without even letting you know with or without a purposive intent in his/her mind. This is not something only certain people are associated with; this is a human tendency and this does not need to be justified. Taking advantage of our well-being we often try to take advantage of people even if they are very close to us without even thinking of what he or she will go through.

So, the human mind indeed is designed like that while some of us find a way to bury down these thoughts and train our brains to sublimate these thoughts, some people act upon the impulse of these thoughts. While most of the times there is always a purpose to why human being does such things, which are going to affect someone and there are some rationale and motivation behind them doing that stuff. But in a very rare case, it also happens that one can develop the tendency to prey upon others without having goal, motivation, and intent. Dark Psychology is associated with the study of the psychological nature of human beings as to why they do such things and it seeks to understand the thoughts, processes, and ideas that lead to the predatory nature of human beings.

Importance of Dark Psychology

As mentioned above the basic principle of Dark psychology is to know the facts and thoughts going inside the human brain that induces the preying upon others mentality in human beings and obtaining psychological knowledge about someone is itself a very tough nut to crack. Someone having knowledge of Dark psychology is a person of far much more important than one can realize.

The human brain is filled with numerous thoughts. Even if we sleep our brain does not sleep and keeps generating new ideas and it shows the beauty of our brain. To separate the useless thoughts from the useful ones is a very tough job and only a psychologist can do that. You might not like it when I say that Dark Psychology is at work in the world right now. But you can't change this fact. A person who understands the true meaning of dark psychology has so many advantages over the ones who don't understand it. While it is true that most of us don't even care about understanding the basic meaning of Psychology and remain ignorant about the same, any man who understands dark psychology is rare to find. There are ideas and principles embedded in the dark psychology that can help us grow in every aspect of life. Having knowledge of dark psychology can help you in fulfilling your professional and personal endeavors. You don't need to become a psychopath to do that but, having some common sense and a little bit of curiosity is enough to understand all about dark psychology and how it's going to prove fruitful results for you. You don't need to understand dark psychology as a defensive measure as it covers vast aspects of life other than just defending you.

The 4 Dark Psychology Traits

Narcissism

Narcissism is the dark trait that is displayed by individuals who are narcissists. Narcissists display high levels of grandiosity, superiority, dominance, and entitlement. Narcissists tend to be charming people who have a positive outlook, which is why they are good at fooling other people. According to psychologists, narcissists are usually on the lookout for people to feed into their "narcissistic supply" because they want to use those people to build their own egos. They also lack empathy for others.

One main characteristic that you see in narcissists is that they are

quite good at building and cultivating relationships, and they can initially blind people to the fact that they are acting out of self-interest. We all tend to have narcissistic traits to varying extents, but there are few among us who have Narcissistic Personality Disorder.

The terms Narcissist and Narcissism come from Narcissus, a character in Greek mythology. Narcissus was a hunter and a very attractive young man. He was so attractive that everyone seemed to fall in love with him. However, he only treated people with contempt and disdain, and he never returned the love that others showed him. Because of this, he was cursed by Nemesis (the goddess of revenge) to fall in love with his reflection in a pool of water.

Just like Narcissus, modern-day narcissists are in love with themselves. However, psychologists have come to discover that narcissists don't love the real versions of themselves; they are in love with perfect versions of themselves, which only exist in their imaginations. It's easy to assume that narcissists have high self-esteem, but that is not actually the case; they have a perverse kind of self-esteem that is not predicated on accepting or loving who they are but loving a fictitious grandiose version of themselves. When a narcissist acts out of self-interest to someone's detriment, it's usually in pursuit of that grand vision of himself, even though he knows for a fact that it's not real.

Narcissists have an exaggerated sense of self-importance. They think they deserve to be treated better than everyone else around them. They have an exaggerated sense of entitlement, and they truly believe that when they receive favorable treatment in certain situations, it is for the common good. A narcissist thinks that when he is taking advantage of you, he is actually doing you a favor. This way, he can rationalize a lot of selfish and evil acts. In a relationship, a narcissist will think of himself as more important and more deserving than the other person. In the workplace, a narcissist will think that he has more natural talent than his colleagues, and he, therefore, deserves to be put in charge of projects or to be promoted ahead of everyone else.

Narcissists believe that they are special, and to reinforce this belief, they surround themselves with people who tend to be agreeable. They want to be around people who will validate their inflated

sense of self-worth. Now, even the most agreeable people have the ability to spot flaws in others, and after spending some time with narcissists, they will stop affirming the negative actions of the narcissist. To prevent this, narcissists try to control the thoughts and actions of the people around them.

Narcissists are very controlling. They control people in both covert and overt ways. They try to manipulate others so that they keep feeding their “narcissistic supply,” and when people try to break from their control, they can react with anger or rage. In relationships, narcissists are more likely to practice domestic abuse because they are trying to keep the other person under their thumb. At work, narcissists are more likely to act vindictively because they want to punish others for challenging their dominance. Later in the book, we will discuss ways to deal with narcissistic people.

Machiavellianism

Machiavellianism is a dark trait that involves deceitfulness and manipulation. Machiavellians tend to be very cynical people (not that they are skeptical or they have doubtful curiosity; they just don't care for the moral restrictions that the rest of society adheres to). They tend to be amoral and self-interested. They don't have a sense of right and wrong; they'll take any course of action, as long as it serves their interests.

Machiavellians are cold, unprincipled, and they are naturally adept at interpersonal manipulation. They believe that life is a zero-sum game and that the key to success is manipulating others. They approach all kinds of relationships with a cold, calculating attitude, and to them, when they desire a certain outcome in a given situation, the end invariably justifies the means.

Machiavellianism is named after Niccolò Machiavelli, the Italian political philosopher who is best known for writing *The Prince*. The book offers advice on how one can control the masses and manipulate people in order to gain power over them. The book teaches people to be cunning, manipulative, and deceitful, as long as they get what they want. It argues that in pursuit of one's interests, it's morally justifiable to harm others. In this sense, Machiavellianism is similar to narcissism because, in both traits, there is an underlying belief that one's own interests serve the common good, even if people are hurt in the process.

People with these traits are likely to cheat, lie, and harm others in order to achieve their goals. They are emotionally detached from the people around them, so if you are in a relationship with them, you may notice that all your experiences are shallow. They won't hesitate to harm others if it's expedient for them. Where narcissists, sadists, and psychopaths may harm others for their own enjoyment, because they lack empathy, or to fulfill certain emotional needs, Machiavellians will do it for a rational and arguably pragmatic purpose. They have little consideration for the emotional collateral damage that they leave behind; in fact, they only care about others' emotions if they know it will come back to haunt them.

Some psychologists and anthropologists have argued that Machiavellianism could be an evolutionary advantage and that it's, therefore, a desirable trait. Machiavellians understand people's emotional reactions, which helps them deal with real and perceived threats, but they can technically bypass empathy when reacting to threats, which means that their actions are more effective. If the rule of the jungle (survival of the fittest) applies, then Machiavellians are more likely to thrive. The problem with this argument is that we are not in the jungle anymore, and society only functions if we all care about the welfare of others.

Machiavellians are master manipulators, and they are highly likely to be involved in white collar crimes. People with this trait are more likely to be involved in embezzlement schemes, pyramid schemes, stock swindling schemes, overpricing schemes, and political crimes. They work their way to the top by manipulating people, and when they get to positions of power (whether in business or in politics), they use the same techniques to manipulate the masses.

Psychopathy

Of all the dark traits, psychopathy is the most malevolent. Psychopaths have very low levels of empathy, so they don't care for others. On the other hand, they have extremely high levels of impulsiveness, and they are thrill-seeking individuals. They are very callous, very manipulative, and they have a heightened sense of grandiosity. They seek thrills without caring about the harm that they inflict on others in the process.

Psychopaths are more difficult to spot than you might think. They

tend to keep normal outward appearances; even though they lack empathy and a conscience, they learn to act normally by observing others' emotional reactions. They can even come across as charming when they are trying to manipulate you. They are volatile, and they have criminal tendencies, although this isn't always the case.

There is a lot of interest and fascination with psychopaths, which is why you see so many depictions of them in pop culture. However, with fascination comes misconceptions. We tend to think of psychopaths as serial killers, bomber, super villains, and people who are certifiably insane, and the danger here is that we forget that most psychopaths are just normal (at least by all appearances), and they can harm us in other ways. People who like starting fights, who disregard your emotions and those who consistently lie to you may turn out to be psychopaths.

Adult psychopathy cannot be treated. However, when psychopathic tendencies are observed in children and young people, they can be put through certain programs that teach them to be less callous and more considerate of others.

A key thing you need to understand is the difference between a psychopath and a sociopath. In colloquial conversations, these two terms are often used interchangeably, but in psychology, they have different meanings. A sociopath is a person who has antisocial tendencies. Now, these antisocial tendencies are usually a result of social and environmental factors; for example, a person who has a bad childhood may turn out to be a sociopath because he doesn't trust society in general, or he has developed certain psychological issues as a result of the unfavorable upbringing.

On the other hand, psychopathic traits are innate. People don't become psychopaths; they are born psychopaths. However, social and environmental factors may contribute to a person's particular brand of psychopathy. For example, people who are born with psychopathic traits and are brought up in an environment that is chaotic and violent, are more likely to have more pronounced manifestations of their psychopathy. Experts agree that there are three main factors that contribute towards psychopathy; genetics, brain anatomy, and environmental factors.

Like the other dark traits, psychopathy exists on a spectrum. Clinicians use a scale assessment system to measure the level of

psychopathy; everyone falls somewhere on that scale, but people with a score of 30 and above are considered to have psychopathy that rises to the level of clinical significance. The Hare Psychopathy Checklist is used by mental health professionals to check for psychopathy, mostly in clinical patients and in criminals, but if you suspect that someone you are dealing with is a psychopath, you can find it online and use it for free as a guide if you want to know for sure that you are indeed dealing with a psychopath.

Sadism

Like the other three dark traits, sadism is characterized by callousness. Sadists tend to have normal levels of impulsiveness and manipulation, which explains why this trait wasn't originally included in what is now known as the "dark triad." The defining characteristic of sadists is that they enjoy cruelty.

Everyday sadists tend to be normal and functional by all indications, but they enjoy harming others. Sadists are referred to as "everyday sadists" because it's important to make a distinction between them and the narcissists, Machiavellians, and psychopaths who may manifest sadism as part of their other dark traits. Sadists are intrinsically motivated to cause others harm, even if they are completely innocent. Sometimes, sadists can prioritize the infliction of emotional pain on others even if it comes at a personal cost to them. They find cruelty to be pleasurable and exciting, and some even find it sexually stimulating.

Some psychologists have noted that sadists are often drawn towards career paths where they are allowed to harm other people under the guise of legitimate work. That means that many of them flock towards law enforcement, the military, etc. Psychologists have observed that when the levels of sadism in police forces are compared to the levels of sadism in the general population, the levels within police departments are always invariably higher. This could explain why police forces often have problems with some of their members taking the law into their own hands.

Sadists tend to inflict pain on people around them for no reason, and they are likely to escalate, especially when they discover that the person in question is less likely to push back. That explains why bullies keep picking on people who don't stand up to them.

Sadists are the kind of people who would tell your secrets to other

people even after promising to keep them private because they enjoy it when you experience discomfort. They are also more likely to portray others in false or unflattering terms, with the intention of damaging the other person's reputation; while Machiavellians may do this to advance their personal agenda, sadists would do this because it's fun for them. Sadists may also work actively to get you fired from your job or to jeopardize your success, not because they want to get ahead of you, but just because they want you to be unhappy. They may also try to ruin your personal relationships; they'll cause turmoil in your relationship, then sit back and enjoy the drama and misery. They are more likely to steal other people's property, not because they need it, but because they don't want what the other person to have it. They are more likely to bully you either in real life or online.

You can always spot a sadist by the comments and remarks he makes online. Most internet trolls tend to be everyday sadists. They will make negative comments about pretty much anything, not because they strongly believe in the opinion that they have, but because they want to annoy you or get a rise out of you. They'll always find something negative to say about even the most unifying things online. With trolls, the more you engage with them, the more energized they become, and the more they'll bother you online

Chapter 59. Mind Control Techniques

Some synonymous terms of mind control are brainwashing, thought reform, manipulation, exploitive persuasion, sociopsychological manipulation, behavioral change technology, and a few others. As previously mentioned, there are both good and bad reasons for mind control, but we tend to only see things which are negative.

There are a few different types of manipulation. Here, we are going to discuss 2 of those types. First, there is the sociopsychological manipulator. This is someone who attempts to use social influence in order to lead someone into a change in behavior or a decision. This can be indirect and deceptive in nature. It's also possible for this to be direct. With this form of manipulation, there is often great pressure put on the target individuals. An example of this is peer-pressure, but there are much bigger examples that we rarely notice.

One of the best and most common uses of psychological manipulation is marketing. We don't think of marketing as being this and it isn't usually negative in nature. One exception to this is with negative political ads. However, marketing is simply persuasion on a large scale. Let's look at television commercials. What are they exactly? Years ago, there were ads for cigarettes. Most of those who have a few years under the belt will probably remember the Marlboro Man. He was a healthy cowboy who portrayed a tough image. He was usually on horseback and sucking down a cigarette. We never saw anyone with cancer or being unable to breathe on those commercials. There were also numerous tobacco ads with very physically attractive people, both ladies and men, who were holding lit cigarettes in the ad. In reality, those who smoked for a long time usually looked anything but like the people portrayed on television and in the printed ads.

What about the commercials that attempt to lead us to believe that if we buy a certain product, our lives will somehow instantly become great? "Buy this drink and you will forever be ecstatic!" I like the pharmaceutical ads. "Are you feeling sad and depressed? Talk to your doctor about blah medication and kiss the sadness goodbye." There is no mention of what the possibilities for the cause of this sadness may be and how the best treatment is to stop

what may be causing the problem, if possible, and not simply medicating it. They may even use pictures of cute little puppies or laughing children. They have associated something joyful and peaceful with their product leading you to subconsciously form the same connection. This is manipulation at its best. How about fast-food ads? It's a well-known fact that most people need to eat healthy in order to be physically fit. Eating this which are proven bad for you may not be a terrible thing if done in moderation but only in moderation. Have you ever seen an out-of-shape person on a fast-food ad?

When we are teenagers, in high-school, we are bombarded by psychological manipulation from all angles. We had to deal with the advertising seen on television and in magazines. We had to deal with growing up and listening to our parents. Then there was the, ever so dreaded, bombardment of peer-pressure. I am sure that everyone remembers this. Peer-pressure is simply the culmination of several kinds of social manipulation. This happens when outside ideas are placed in one person's head and then that individual passes them on. One child is made to believe that a brand of clothing is the best thing since sliced bread. Then he or she tells others that leading them to believe the same and to run to the store to buy them. This goes on and on. As time goes on, and we progress in technology, the pressure, and the manipulating, of teens is increasing at an exponential rate. Now, not only are kids pressured at school but due to social media, this is a never-ending cycle. It's worth mentioning that this all takes place without commonly being noticed and recognized for what it truly is. We call it "life" or "growing up" but what it is it really? It's mass manipulation.

Previously mentioned in this book, there is the beautiful art of political persuasion. We are constantly subjected to political ads and campaigns. Most of the time, important issues are thrown out of the window and candidate's pasts or mistakes, or transgressions, are brought to the forefront. A particular person may actually have the answers needed for positive change, but that does not matter when the political ads come out. We are led to forget that a certain candidate has an impeccable record of public service and good deeds and led to only think about one night that individual had too much to drink while back in college 20 years ago. This is becoming ever more prominent. Candidates don't even need to do this kind of

advertising or manipulating, themselves. Anyone who can afford it can take it upon themselves and begin a smear campaign against someone and because of the way our brains work, if we see an ad enough times, we will begin to believe what we are being told.

Here, let us look at what we have learned, and are learning, about manipulation from another perspective. Let's look at it in a way that we can protect ourselves from it. Yes, you may be reading this book in order to learn how to do it, but you can also learn how to recognize that it's being done to you and how to block it. It begins with knowledge and mindfulness. If you are aware of these tactics and why they are being done, you are able to protect yourself from them. If you see a cute puppy on a tire commercial, know that puppies have nothing to do with car tires and that the commercial is only trying to manipulate your thinking and attempting to lead you into associating the two.

The examples for psychological manipulation are so numerous there could be an entire series of books written on this topic alone. However, for our purposes, we will move on to the other form of manipulation. Now, we are going to discuss a much darker method utilized to manipulate others. With this particular tactic, there is usually never a positive outcome for the target. This tactic is harmful to others and is not recommended for you to try in this book. Personally, I would rather you stay far away from this form of manipulation.

Now let's look at an emotional manipulator. Unlike with psychological manipulation, emotional manipulation is almost always negative and does harm to others. With this technique, the manipulator preys on the emotions of those in which he or she is targeting. An example of this is when a child is able to manipulate parents into making decisions based on their feelings of guilt. Whatever the cause of this guilt, the manipulator will use it to his or her advantage. For instance, if a parent needed to cancel out on some outing with a child. Then the child brings that up at a later date as a reason for why that parent should or shouldn't do something. "Dad, you didn't take me to the record store last Friday. So, the least that you can do today is taking me to the clothing store." The child is playing on the fact that his or her father feels bad about not being able to take the child to the record store and is using that to persuade or manipulate him into going to buy some

clothes.

One area where this manipulation often creeps up is with those suffering from addiction. It may seem odd to bring up something like addiction in a book about manipulation and persuasion, but that is actually a big part of the world of addiction. Anyone who has been touched by this disease can relate. This isn't simply referring to addicts. It includes their family, friends, and support network too. Actually, the ones who are not actually addicted are most likely to be the targets of emotional manipulation; Not the other way around. Why is this case?

Most addicts need to be rather intelligent and able to manipulate others. Otherwise, they probably wouldn't be able to be addicts. They wouldn't usually have the necessary resources. Addicts need those who are known as enablers. These are those who, with or without their knowledge, enable addicts to continue their use of whatever substance they desire. This can be with money or can be something like babysitting an addict's child so that the addict can go out and use. Most people wouldn't help with things like this, but they are put in positions where they see it best to go along with the program of helping that addict. One common method an addict will use here is emotional manipulation.

I have personally been part of the life of an addict and I will use some of what I experienced as an example. A very good friend of mine, due to things beyond his direct control, became an addict in his adulthood. Although he was an adult at the time, his addiction led him to regress back to his teenage years. What is meant by that is he began to live his life as if he were still a teenager. He moved back in with his parents and began to look to them for financial support. It's here were my example of how addicts will manipulate falls into place.

As we have seen, guilt is one method where an emotional manipulator will use in order to successfully get what that manipulator is trying for. With my friend, he was trying to get money in order to feed his addiction. I'm not talking about a few dollars here and there. He was spending somewhere in the area of \$100 to \$250 per day on drugs. Although he did have an income, it wasn't sufficient enough for these expenditures. So, he went to his mother for money. At first, she was able to tell him no. Then he began the guilt tactics in his manipulation. He used mistakes that

his parents had made against them. He was able to identify those things from his past which bothered his mother the most. It didn't take long before he had turned his mom into a total enabler and this began her emotional downfall.

It wasn't his intention to harm his mother. Addicts think differently than everyone else. He just wanted the drugs he felt that he needed. Although it wasn't his intention to hurt her, that's exactly what he did. He would remind her of some time back when he was a kid where things were not especially rosy. His father hadn't been the best dad and that is what he brought up. His mother, on the other hand, was a great mom but she felt partially responsible and guilty for what he had to endure from his dad. He didn't hesitate to bring those things up with her. She would jump at his every word. He played the emotional manipulation card well and, because of this, created an enabler that helped him drag out his addiction for years.

One of the best things that an emotional manipulator can use to lead another is love. This is just as, if not more, powerful than fear. This form of manipulation is probably the most damaging. It towers over blackmail and other trifling techniques. Love is a powerful motivator and this can be tweaked to be very unhealthy. Eventually, he regained his life, dropped the drugs, and is now spending what life he and his mother have in order to make amends to her and his entire family.

Other relationships are also subject to emotional manipulation. Unhealthy marriages are one example. In these relationships, usually one of the two will be the manipulator and the other his or her target. This is a very one-sided relationship that commonly is one person living only to please the other. The other will continuously take and take until there is nothing left. He or she will use whatever tactics are necessary to keep this going. Of course, there is almost always severe and irrefutable damage done to one of the two. This not only leads to divorce but can lead to much worse. It can lead to one of them being destroyed for the remainder of their life.

Now, let's look at one area where both psychological and emotional manipulation can occur simultaneously. We have all heard of cults but what do we actually know about them and those in which are affected. Cults, and those harmed by them, are widely

misunderstood. There are many myths associated with cults and unfair stereotyping of those who are former members of them. Nevertheless, cults, and cult leaders, are prime examples of manipulators who use all of the available tactics in order to control their subjects.

What are some of the myths that are associated with cults? Here are a few. People can just leave if they are in a cult and wish not to be. Only stupid or non-assertive people join cults. Cults are based on religion. Cults are strange and their members are anti-social and usually outcasts. These are just a few. Now, let's look at the truth and how manipulation plays a key role in the cult leader's abilities in controlling members.

I remember learning about the cult leader Jim Jones and how he led over 900 followers, a third of them children, to commit mass suicide. In truth, not all of them drank the poison. Some were shot. They were the people who refused to drink poison because they wanted to live. How did they wind up in that situation, to begin with? It's complicated and is another topic that an entire series of books could be written. Here is a short summary.

Jones was very charismatic and intelligent. He was able to identify, or be mindful, of the wants and needs of people specific to that time and location. He was able to identify with those people who would follow him and he made them truly believe that he would be the one to lead them to better lives. He did this through manipulation and persuasion. He was both honest in some things and dishonest in others. In the beginning, the cult wasn't the way it had become at the end. As with all successful manipulators, he had to slowly progress in his power and he had to demonstrate extreme patience. After making them believe he was best for their lives and it was in their best interest to follow him, he began to place more control over them. The members were virtually prisoners by the end. They had invested all of their financial, emotional, and psychological resources into the cult and now we're trapped. Then Jones became dark and his mental health drastically declined. He was able to take them all down with him. We say to each other that there is no way we could harm a child, especially our own child, or anyone else for that matter. However, by the time the mass suicide took place, they had no choice. It was poison or a bullet. A horrible truth but a real example of the power that a manipulator can gain and the

destruction that can come as a result.

Now that we have taken a look down that dark path, let's come back to the lighter side of persuasion. Here is something to think about. What is the first step in persuasion and manipulation? First, you need to find out what it is that you are wanting. Then you need to find a way to make your target feel as if he or she needs or wants the same. If not the same, a way for your target to think that he or she will somehow benefit from what you are trying to get them to do. You need to make it enticing. This does not have to be a lie. This is especially relevant to the workplace. There is probably nothing that will benefit you, while at work, that will not also benefit someone else. Use this to your advantage.

If you are truly intelligent and able to read and understand others, you will probably be able to identify reasons for that person to go along with your wishes and those reasons are genuine. You won't need to go to the dark place of manipulation. You will be able to simply persuade someone else based on joint benefits. A good word to remember is conglomeration. This means to bring together. If you have the ability to cause someone else to make a decision and you have done this without lying, harming another, and with integrity, you have proven yourself to be a true master of persuasion without gaining the stigma of being a trifling manipulator.

Chapter 60. Manipulation Techniques

There are a lot of techniques that are used by manipulators to gain absolute or a substantial level of control on their victims. Most times, manipulators lookout for some types of personalities to prey on. The reason for this is that they feel the need to manipulate their victims easily. They look out for the vulnerable parts of others and use it against them.

Most of the time, their preys are either naïve, empathetic, those with low self-esteem, or with a lack of confidence. Below are some common techniques used by manipulators:

Gaslighting

This is a style of manipulation that makes use of three different phrases: "it didn't happen," "you are out of your mind," "it's your imagination." Some experts believe that this may be one of the most dangerous manipulative techniques there is as it aims as disorganizing and killing the victim's sense of reality.

When a person is manipulated with this technique, he loses touch with his reality and is no longer able to trust himself. What is worse is that the victims of this type of manipulative technique do not feel the need to call out the manipulator for maltreating them.

Projection

In this type of manipulation, the manipulator finds someone else to blame for everything that goes wrong around them. This is something that is common with most people but is more common amongst narcissists and psychopaths.

Here, the manipulator makes use of a defense tactic, which involves shifting responsibility from his/herself for wrongdoings and negative attitudes and blames everything on another person besides himself.

Generalizations

This happens in cases where a person chooses to misunderstand another for ulterior motives intentionally.

Have you ever found yourself in a case where a sibling, for instance, refuses to think about the long-term effects of his actions or that of your parents? Though you haven't said anything as such, this sibling

goes about telling everyone who cares to listen that you called your parents "wicked" just because you stated that you were not comfortable with a certain major decision they are making for you.

In cases like this, you find yourself wondering what is really happening and start to believe that maybe your sibling didn't understand what you said. The truth is that this type of person understands their victims clearly, but they choose to run with an entirely different story.

This is very common with narcissists who aren't very good at making very sound intellectual decisions because they are plain lazy when it comes to using their brains, so they would rather make hasty generalization of whatever a person says than to make a critical assessment of the word of another person.

They usually make conclusions and statements that are not in line with the thoughts and words of their victims, and they do not try to look at things from a different perspective to see where their victim is coming from or consider the reasons why they said what they said.

Moving the Goalposts

There is a common logical fallacy known as moving the goalposts, and sociopaths and abusive narcissists make good use of it all the time. In this case, the manipulator makes sure that they always have a cause to complain about their victims, because they find reasons to, and not because they are actually not pleased with the actions or words of their victims.

Even in cases where the victim has found every possible reason to justify their actions or validate their words or even done things to meet their demand, they remain adamantly dissatisfied. In most cases, they simply set higher expectations or change their terms, or they simply ask that you give more proof.

Changing the Topic

This may seem like an innocent action, but it is not. Changing subjects in conversations is one of the techniques used by manipulators. With is a way to run away from being held accountable for their words or actions.

This is also common with narcissists as they do not wish to ever dwell on a topic that will demand that they should be responsible

for anything at all. To avoid this, they simply find ways to change topics in order to favor themselves.

This type of manipulation will go on for as long as possible if the victim keeps letting it happen. In cases like this, it becomes difficult to have relevant discussions whenever the manipulator is around.

Name-Calling

This is a technique that involves attacking the victim's personality by calling him derogatory names. Most victims may think this is normal because they have become used to it from bullies in school, to parents, friends, or partners who call them names, but it is not, and it is as destructive as other manipulative techniques. This type of manipulation is found in all areas of life, and it goes as far as presidential politics.

Devaluation

This is common with friends or colleagues who tend to show love to you while they always have bad or terrible things to say about the last person that was in your place.

Narcissistic abusers always do this. When it comes to intimate relationships, they have very terrible things to say about their exes, but eventually, the new partner is going to find out the reason why the ex was such a “terrible partner” because the narcissist will eventually mete out the same treatment that he gave to the ex, to the current partner.

This type of person can also be found in a professional setting as much as it can be found in personal settings.

Making Aggressive Jokes

Sometimes, you find yourself uncomfortable with the jokes that are coming from someone else. Your sense of humor may not be the problem as you will be made to believe. Maybe the main problem is the motive behind the joke.

There are people who derive pleasure in making malicious comments at the expense of others. These comments may be presented as jokes so that they can easily pull through with it without consequences. This way, they are able to say terrible things without having to apologize for the things they say.

Because they maintain their innocence in saying what they want to say, you are rendered powerless and unable to complain because

anytime you try to react, you are seen as one who does not have a healthy sense of humor.

Less Common Manipulation Techniques

There are some manipulation techniques used that are not so common but have been proven to be effective when used. Let's take a look at some of those:

Home Advantage

When a person wants to manipulate you, he may insist that you both meet in a place where it will be easy for him to exert his dominance over you and control you.

What they do is simply take you to their homes, office, car, or any other place where it will be easy for them to maintain their ownership or familiarity because you simply do not have such an advantage.

Rather than having you call them, they will prefer to do the calling in a phone conversation. Since they are the ones paying the bills, they are able to maintain their dominance or ownership, and if for any reason you choose to hang upon them, you are tagged rude and manner-less for not observing phone ethics.

Speak First To Determine Your Strong And Weak Points

This is a technique that is common with marketers when they are trying to pitch their sales to you. They come at you by asking general probing questions, which will give you room to speak for a while. This way, they are able to determine your personality, thought pattern, and attitude.

It is with these findings that they are also able to know your strengths and weaknesses.

Certainly, their questions come with ulterior motives, and they are going to use your answer against you later. This type of manipulation can manifest in your office or your personal relationships.

Manipulation Of Facts

Lies and excuses are a common part of this technique. These types of manipulators are two-faced people. They find ways of blaming the victim for getting victimized. To do this, they alter the truth or choose the information that they are willing to let out. They may

also choose not to give very vital information.

This type of manipulators exaggerates, they are biased and may also be prone to understating issues in order to have things go in their favor.

Presents Overwhelming Facts And Statistics

This is a form of "intellectual bullying," and some people like to engage in it. This is done by assuming that they are experts in certain fields or areas of discussion. They present themselves as though they know the most about some particular areas.

They, however, manipulate people by giving false facts, statistics, or other data because they know that their victims do not know so much about the topic. This is a common strategy in sales and the world of finance. It is also common in professional terrains and negotiations. People usually make use of this technique in social gatherings and other arguments.

By placing themselves as experts, they wield the power that comes with the position, so they try to push through with their real motif in a more convincing manner. There are people who do not have any other reason for using this technique, aside from the need to feel a sense of intelligence.

Overwhelming Victims With Procedures And Red Tape

There are some types of manipulators who use officialism, processes, laws/by-laws, organizations, and another possible roadblock to exercise their superiority or power while making things harder for others.

This is a technique that is commonly used to delay the quest for facts and truths. It is used to hide the shortcomings of manipulators, their weaknesses, and it helps them to avoid scrutiny.

Display Of Negative Emotions By Raising Their Voices

In order to manipulate others in a very aggressive manner, some manipulators raise their voices while discussing with others. They tend to think that they will be able to have things their own ways and have others submit to their wills and get what they want from them if they are able to raise their voices and react to things in a negative way.

The over-projection of their voices always comes with some strong

body language like pacing or display gestures that depict excitement in order to boost the impact of their emotions.

Negative Surprises

This is a technique that is used to throw people off balance and gain an advantage over them psychologically. This happens more in negotiations. It entails having the victim to make assertions that he/she may not be able to pull through with or deliver on in one way or the other.

In most cases, the most potent type of negative surprises comes without giving any signs or warnings. This way, the victim is not able to get himself set to counter their moves.

Since you have already made commitments that you are not able to deliver on, the manipulator then asks that you make certain compromises to be able to continue the business at hand.

Giving Little Time To Make Major Decisions

This is a common strategy used in marketing and negotiations. In cases like this, the manipulator pressures the victim into making hasty decisions without letting him/her get enough time to think it through.

By creating tension and gaining control over the victim, the manipulator aims at breaking the victim's defenses, such that he/she will finally give in to their demands.

Silent Treatment

This is a technique where the manipulator creates a sense of anxiety by making their victims wait. To achieve their aims, they refuse to pick calls, respond to messages, or attend to their victim's inquiries.

What the manipulator hopes to achieve with this technique is to create a feeling of doubt and uncertainty in the mind of the victim. This usually works in their favor as they sit back and leverage on the silence they have created.

Feigned Ignorance

Manipulators use this method by simply acting dumb. They pretend as though they do not understand the needs of their victims, or pretend like they do not know what the victim wants from them. This way, they become both possessive and aggressive, such that

you begin to take on their responsibilities and stress over things that you ordinarily should not concern yourself with.

This strategy is common amongst kids who wish to manipulate adults into doing things for them, or just to stress, or delay them. There are adults who also use this method to hide their selfish interests or to hide secrets away from people. It is also used by adults to evade their duties.

Inspire Others By Creating An Attractive Vision

Before you attempt to manage others, you will need to create a clear vision to determine your goals as a leader and as a team. If you cannot set your goals clearly, it may not be easy to have others follow you.

Create A Friendly Environment Based On Trust

If you don't have a real connection with the people you hope to manage, you may end up being a figurehead or just a title bearer. This means that people will only respect you because they need to obey your position and not your person. This may not help you in your quest for management.

If you must tap into the strengths and abilities of those you are relating with, you will have to engage with them as people who matter to you and who you care about, rather than relating with them as people you are compelled to work with.

Gain Valuable Insights Into The Thought Patterns Of Others

Every day, as you relate with others, you are going to get hints at the things that are in their minds and what they are thinking. NLP experts pay keen attention to linguistic and paralinguistic features, as well as behaviors in understanding the things that are going on within others. They also believe that they are able to get the best out of others by asking relevant questions.

Use Perceptions To Gain New Points Of View

In managing people, one of the most common practices, especially in the hospitality industries, and amongst customer care representatives is putting one's self in someone else's position. This way, you will get to be appreciative of the other person and get to know what it feels like to be them.

Making use of perceptions will also help you to try to look at things

from another angle. You may choose to look at situations with the eye of an observer or try to look at things objectively from both angles to get both ends of the story.

Use Others As Ideals For Excellence

As a manager, one good practice is for you to look at the things that everyone is good at, then learn how they do what they do. Just like the early fathers of NLP, observe and ask questions. Reach out to those that are experts in particular fields and ask them about the series of events. Also, try to pry into their thoughts by asking what they are thinking at every stage.

Try to replicate this process by making it your own model and practice it on your team. This way, you will get good results.

When You Are In Difficult Situations, Find Useful Internal Resources

Take sports, for instance; a good coach is always aware of the fact that most times, his team already has all they need to succeed. To be a good manager, the coach has to help everyone in his team to find these resources.

The simple trick is to encourage them to savor the feelings of joy, strength, and confidence that comes from all the times they have won in the past, and make use of these feelings in other different situations.

Understanding What Matters To Others

People always gain motivation from their personal values. When, as a manager, you are able to understand the things that matter to people when it comes to their work, you will be able to give them a conducive environment for success.

Consider the fact that people often wish to work without interference, even from their managers, and try to respect that fact. If this is what will make them work better, try to give it to them.

One common practice in NLP is approaching life with a sense of curiosity and asking questions as to the reasons why a thing works or doesn't work. Work on building your own sense of curiosity and discover the chance of opening yourself up to a world of endless possibilities.

Chapter 61. The Subtle Art Of Deception

There are ways people use deception; sometimes, the deception is self-deception, while at other times, other people deceive someone else for selfish gains like money or getting confidential information that should not be shared.

Self-deception does not only involve lying to ourselves but also consists of the mind playing tricks on us. With lying, someone is aware of the truth but chooses not to use the truth but instead lie while self-deception people convince themselves unconsciously that a lie is a truth. In self-deception, a person does not realize when they are telling a lie. There are various types of self-deception which include:

Functional self-deception – a person will lie to themselves and even go ahead to convince himself that what he just did is not wrong. A person in this will try to turn a lie into a truth so that it can suit them best. A person who continues to continually deceive themselves this way does not face any risks because they will not see the need for taking a chance no matter how beneficial the risk is. They will convince themselves that the risk is not worth taking.

Value and believe - a person here deceives themselves that the more expensive something is, the more valuable it is. They place worthiness at the value level. If something does not seem valuable to them, they will not go for it. This might make such a person continue chasing things that are valuable but not helpful to them. They think the difficult it is to attain it the worthy it is, so much time may be lost while trying to get something that wasn't going to help them in any way.

Consolatory self-deception - in this, somebody refuses to be accountable for anything and instead continually tries to find the nearest person to blame for everything. For such people, nothing is ever their fault; it's always the other person's fault that something didn't work in a certain way. Such a person is unlikely ever to face their problems because they do not acknowledge them, to begin with.

Lying to others to assure yourself is also another form of self-deception. You tend to make small lies when talking to people until

the lies become your truth somehow. Such people lie to others until they also end up forgetting what the truth was, to begin with. The lie becomes so real that even the truth now becomes a lie. The mind somehow captures the dishonesty, and therefore, the truth is easily forgotten.

The other deception, which is very dangerous involves offenders trying to deceive people in a criminal way. The scammers will get their targeted victims, who will cheat and up sometimes robbing them of a lot of money, getting very confidential information, and sometimes even risking the victim's life. Such offenders are criminals who are continually sought after by the law enforcers. Sometimes they are able to get away with it but at the expense of living the victim in a tragedy of loss and having to deal with the recovery of whatever they have lost from the perpetrators.

Art of deception has been well mastered by some individuals to exploit people into disclosing confidential and personal information, which may be used for scheming purposes. The art of deception is a way of brainwash people to achieve a sure selfish thing. It involves social engineering manipulation, which is the psychological tricking of other people for them to do or disclose their personal information. A lot of malicious activities happen when people interact. People are tricked into making security errors and giving out the very sensitive information that may work against them in the long run.

Social engineering attacks happen when people take a lot of sensitive issues for granted. An offender will first carry out his investigation on his targeted victim and gather as much information as he could get. The information may include social security details that the victim doesn't think is very important. The offender will then try to befriend the victim and gain his trust before proceeding to expose the information by either releasing it or sharing with other sources that may have hired him.

The Attacks May Involve the Following Life Cycle

Preparation – an offender gets their intended victim, gets all the information needed to base the attack, finds the best strategy or method to carry out the attack.

Approach – making friends with the intended victim, faking a believable story so that the victim may be free with them,

Gathering more information – this involves tricking the already made friend who is the victim to give more additional information, delivery of the attack after all the information has been collected, and there is no loophole, destruction of data.

Sealing the deal - the offender erases any evidence that may tie him to the crime, covers all the track to ensure that his attack is not easily traceable, making a natural exit as if nothing happened and as if he is not aware of anything related to those activities.

The most dangerous aspect of this whole social engineering thing is that it is dependent on human mistakes or recklessness. The software and operating system are highly efficient, but when somebody makes a mistake, there is nothing that can prevent this attack from happening. It is very difficult to predict human errors and, therefore, the vulnerabilities.

Social engineering can happen at any time, anywhere in the world, as long as there is human interaction. Below is a list of some of the most and widely known social engineering attacks that exist.

Social Engineering Techniques

Baiting is a deliberate attempt to try and provoke someone or something. Baiting attacks involve giving fake promises to provoke the greed or curiosity of the victim. A victim is lured into a trap where their information is stolen, or their system is inflicted with malware. The most common type of baiting involves the use of media to distribute malware. An example of this is when an offender intentionally put a malware-infected flash where the victim is most likely to access like in a mall, in the washrooms, or parks where the victim can quickly get hold of it. The bait has an original look and has a label that may indicate things that the victim is most likely to be interested in. When the victim picks up the flash, and due to curiosity inserts the flash inside a home or work computer, there will be an automatic installation of the malware on the system.

Scareware involves constant scaring of people with false alarms or fabricated threats. The victim is made to think that his system has a malware infection, which may make them install software that is not really needed for the victim but may be useful to the offender or even be deceived into installing the malware itself without them realizing that it is malware. Scareware is also called deception

software or "Fraudware." The most famous or used shareware includes the pop-up banners that pop up on someone's browser when they are on the screen that screams that the computer is infected and may need to be cleaned. What the pop-up banner offers a person is the installation of a tool that may be malware or may be infected with malware. You may also be directed to a site that has infections, and when you get to the site, the computer now becomes infected. Often scareware is distributed as a pop-up banner in the mails as a spam mail or even as a buy offer to buy things online with very low prices or even in the form of very catchy promotions. If someone does all or one of the above, their computer will be infected.

Pretexting – the deception here is wisely crafted with trickery lies involved. An offender will trick the victim by engaging them and asking for sensitive, confidential information so that the offender can be able to perform a specific task for the victim. Usually, the task includes something that may help the victim. To be able to achieve this, the attacker will first try to engage the victim by impersonation. They may pretend to be a family member, friend, co-worker, police, bank official, or any person with authority to make such inquiries. The offender will begin by asking questions that are intended to gather a victim's real identity from which they will then be able to gather confidential information. The pretext may ask questions about the social number details pretending to be the police, and later use the features to access all the data belonging to the victim. This scam is used to gather the most detailed information that is supposed to be a top-secret, and that could quickly bring a person down. The information may include social number details, bank statements, personal address, personal number, phone's recording, and even information that gives a person their security. With this information lying on the wrong hands, destruction is very easy, and that's why it is essential to be sure of who you are sharing your details with.

Phishing is one of the most well-known social engineering attack types. Phishing involves mail, text messages that are intended to create a sense of fear, curiosity, and urgency to the victims. When the victims are at this phase of fear and curiosity, the offender makes the victim reveal their most sensitive information by clicking on links of the most dangerous websites or even by accessing

malware-infected websites. The example of this scam is an online service provider tricks the user into thinking that they have violated the policy and need an essential password change with immediate effect. To change the password, one is required to follow a specific link that usually leads them to a dangerous website that looks exactly as the real website or the actual legit version of the site, and then the victim will be trusting enough to enter the relevant information plus password. Once this information is fed on the website its sent and immediately gets to the offender, since most of these scam emails are usually the same or most likely to be the same, and only changed in several areas to make them seem more authentic and yet sent to everyone, it's very easy for them to be detected and blocked before they get to a lot of innocent victims. The mail servers should try tracing them so that they are blocked on time because they have access to threat sharing forums.

Spear phishing is a version of the phishing scam, and attackers in this scam choose specific individuals or companies. They fake the messages based on a person's well-known identity or character, positions they hold at their workplace, and people that the victim well knows so that it is easily believable. Spearfishing requires so much time and work for the attacker and takes longer for the attacker to implement. This is because it is harder for them to gather everything and also apply, although it's also the best rewarding method for the attacker. A spear-phishing attack may involve someone pretends to be the company's IT guy, and he may send emails to a specific or several employees. The mail is written precisely as an IT guy would and also have the same signature as the IT guy. It is, therefore, very easy for the mail recipients to think it's an authentic message because of how detailed and genuine it looks. The email may persuade the recipients to change their password by following a link that the offender intends them to follow for them to be able to capture the company's details. There are several ways that people can avoid and stop this kind of scams.

Vishing – sometimes, the attackers are not always using the internet to scam, but then other scammers will use the phone calls. What the scammers will do is create an interactive voice response system of a certain company. They will then manipulate people to call using the toll-free number. When people fall into this trick, they will enter their details before making the calls, and therefore, the

attackers will get access to their information in this way.

Tailgating – Here, attackers will get help from someone on the inside who can access the information on their behalf or even who can tip them on various issues.

Quid pro quo – this involves people impersonating the technical support team. They will make calls to a particular company and pretend to be trying to solve a technical issue. The offender will try to solve un existing hitches through the phone call by making the victim do precisely as they want or intend them to. This kind of scam involves a reward from the offender in exchange for the information they will get.

Social Engineering Prevention

Social engineering is a scam intended to manipulate people by playing with their emotions by creating fear or curiosity for the attackers to be able to gather information. There are, therefore, cautions that a person can take in order to avoid these scams. Emails received should be taken with great caution, reading, analyzing, and getting to know every detail before acting on them. Be alert of all the pop-ups, promotions or adverts, and any digital information that is just at the disposal.

Improving emotional intelligence is the most significant prevention of any manipulation. The attackers will try to play with your emotions; what they most want from you is to make you fearful, guilty, and anxious. A person with high emotional intelligence cannot be played in this manner and is therefore safe from manipulation.

Be cautious of your environment before accessing your account or any activity on the internet. One glance at your computer from the wrong person might significantly expose your confidential information.

Avoid and stop opening emails from sources that are not well known to you. If you are not familiar with the sender, you should not feel obligated to reply to a mail. And even though you know the sender but the message seems suspicious, or you do not understand the message, it's good to do a follow up before acting on the mail. To do this confirmation, you may call them through their phones to hear directly from them, or instead of following the link; you should

go directly to the server's original site to be sure. It's good to always remember that emails are hacked all the time, and even though the source of the email may be genuine, he may have been hacked himself, and the attackers used his mail to scam you.

Multifactor method – the essential information for an attacker is user credentials. The multifactor authentication enables a person to secure their account so that in case the system is compromised; your mind is still safe. The security information of the report should always be safeguarded.

Being careful of all those too good to be genuine offers is very important. Attackers know how to play with your mind, and suggestions are very enticing. Next time before you click an offer link, it's good to pause and think because you might be protecting yourself from a massive scam. You may decide to look the offer up on google to find out if the offer is indeed genuine or not.

Keeping your computer's antivirus updated is also very important. Regularly updating the antivirus should be a norm or downloading a new antivirus on a daily basis. Then the next thing should be continually checking the computers to make sure that the system has no infections.

Attackers are very daring because they will get a person's phone number and make the victim the most irresistible offer. They are very friendly because they intend to make you trust them. Sometimes they will ask the victims for money in order for the victim to get the offer, which is usually much valuable than the money they are asking for. This art of deception is called a Fraud. But then the extreme of deception is when attackers decide to use psychological games of deceit with the victim who is now the social engineering.

Sometimes attackers do not just manipulate for financial gains. Sometimes the attackers will manipulate to gather information. This manipulation sometimes involves even having your friends manipulating you for them to access your password.

Chapter 62. How To Influence People

There are going to be certain times in your life when you will find that manipulation is going to come in handy. While you know that it is so important to practice in as many scenarios as you can, there are going to be ones that you will find manipulation will be the most useful. We are going to focus on the best places where you can use the skills of manipulation so that you can get ahead and really benefit from the things that you have learned so far.

Business Negotiations

When it comes to working on some negotiations in business, it is easy to see how you want to make sure that you can get your way. Getting your own way will usually mean that you want to close a better deal, one that is going to be highly favorable to your own company. Closing these deals, and making sure that they are in your favor, will mean that your company is able to get most, if not all, of the things that it is asking for, and that you will barely have to deal with any inconveniences in the process to do this.

There are a lot of things that you can negotiate during these meetings, such as better terms on the deals, better pricing on the services, and more, and if you use your skills in manipulation, you are more likely to get the whole thing to work in your favor.

When it comes to negotiating on some better deals for the business, you will find that manipulation is a very powerful tool for you to use. Whether others like to admit to this or not, negotiations are rarely fair, and there is usually going to be a person who comes out on top. You want to make sure that the person who comes out on top is you.

When you use manipulation in these efforts, it means that you are easily able to dominate the conversation, without the other person even realizing it. When this happens, others in the negotiation are more likely to give in without even doing a fight, because they think they are getting something good out of it as well. Because of this, and all of the good benefits that you can get from this, you should bring out the manipulation skills that you learn as much as possible when you are working with a business negotiation.

Closing Sales

If you are at all involved in a sales process at some point, then you know that it is not always easy to close sales. If you work in retail, for example, you likely notice that many of the people who come into your store are dreaming and looking around, and sometimes, they won't be prepared to buy anything. Because of this, it can sometimes be valuable to know how to manipulate people as you can encourage them to spend money that they did not otherwise intend to spend.

What this means is that when you get the other person to purchase something through your manipulation techniques, it results in more sales for the business. If you are the one who owns the company, you know how important this is. If you are an employee, you know that effective numbers of sales, and good sales strategies, means that you are more likely to be respected by your employer, and then you can make it up the ladder of the company.

If you are in a sales position that is considered business to business, then you know that manipulation is so important. People who end up going to a meeting with you are likely interested in what you are going to offer, but they could also be shopping around to a few different companies at the same time, and you need to find ways that will put your business ahead of all the other choices that they are considering.

Knowing how to use the right skills of manipulation at any level of sales means that they can close more deals and that they will be left with happier customers. This only means that good things are going to be available for you in the future.

Getting Prices That Are Better

You can use manipulation from the other side of the perspective as well. If you are the customer and knowing how to manipulate during this time can be highly valuable. As you know, many times the salespeople have been given some room to negotiate with their customers in order to encourage sales. This means that if you are willing to use some manipulation and work with them, you can get a special and better deal. You are able just to take the price, but wouldn't it be much better for you to go through and get a better price if you are able to.

Being effective at manipulation means that you can easily manipulate companies to give you the best in deals for services and

products. By promising them your praise and services, for example, you can essentially get them in the palm of your hand. They become far more willing to communicate with their managers and negotiate the best possible deal for you so that you will actively buy from them. Salespeople, especially those who are based on commission, are always eager to close a deal. This allows you to use manipulation in order to get the deal to close in your favor.

Leading the Desired Lifestyle That You Want

Each person has a goal about the desired lifestyle that they would like to have—but the lifestyle that you have right now, and the one that you desire, might not always be the same thing. However, the good thing about using manipulation is that you are able to use it to help you get to the desired lifestyle. There are a lot of ways that you can do this—you just need to learn how to make it work.

Let's say that right now you are living in a house that you are renting, and you want to buy your own home at some point—but right now, the types of homes that you are the most interested in purchasing are not within the price that you can purchase. However, with the right kind of manipulation, you may find that you are able to get a better deal, putting you into the home of your dreams sooner as you would like. This can work with any of the big-ticket items that you would like to purchase, such as cars.

Another way that this can work is with some of the relationships that you are in. If you are someone who would like to find a new group of friends, the friends who are going to help you reflect your new lifestyle, you may find that working with manipulation is going to help you out. You can also use the art of persuasion to convince others to become your friends and spend time with you—and from that, you will then have the friends that you need to live this new lifestyle.

Take this a step further and see how it can work with some of your intimate relationships. If this kind of relationship doesn't look like the one that you would like, then you can bring in some manipulation and see if it is possible to make the right changes towards a better relationship. If you want to have more romance, for example, you would spend some time with fancier places or people.

Getting Out of Things

Have you ever gotten into a situation where you were asked to do something, but you didn't have any want to do it? All of the time we are going to be signed up for things, or given offers, that we aren't really that interested in—and sometimes, it can feel difficult to turn these things down in a polite manner. Depending on who is asking for the favor, you may feel obligated to help them out with it.

However, once you learn how to work with manipulation a bit more, you will find that this is not as big of a problem for you anymore. You may even find that this is a good place to start when it comes to practicing your manipulation. You can bring it up any time that you get stuck doing something that you would rather not be doing.

Not only are you able to use manipulation for your benefit to get out of the reunions or things that family and friends want you to help out with, but you can also use it at work as well. If your boss went and signed you up for something that you don't want to do, you can use manipulation to convince them to let you get out of it, or you can convince someone else to go and do the work for you.

You can use manipulation in any manner that you would like to make sure that you are able to live the life that you want. It can help you to get the business negotiations to work the way that you want, to help you get the friendships, relationships, and to get yourself out of the things that you don't want to do. There are just so many different things that you are able to use manipulation with, and this can be a great way to ensure that you have the life that you have always dreamed about.

Chapter 63. How To Identify And Counter A Manipulation

Identify it

The first key principle about manipulation can identify it. And to identify it, you have to understand the laws of human nature which are gotten from Robert Greene. The first law is that people will attack you if they think that you are weak. The second thing is that people are trying to sense any weakness in you to know whether they should attack you or back off. And the last one is that people are after easy victories. So people are going to sense whether you are weak, and then they're going to think about whether they should attack you or not. If they feel like you're going to be an easy win, then they're going to attack you. And if they think that they are going to get hurt in the process, then they are going to back off and look for the easier victim. And the thing is that these people try to sense your weakness. If they sense that you are weak, they will attack you, and that is where you should use a defensive stand as an offensive stand.

So, to identify somebody who is a manipulator, you have to give up the impression that you are weak and that you are a naive person and that you depend on them because you want to see how they react to power. You want to see how they react when they feel like you have them. You want to appear like a weak victim and see how they react to it and see how they react to your weakness. Appear like you depend on them. Test them as much as you can. You want to appear weak to see how the person will react to you. Because that is when somebody really shows who they really are. So to identify them, you, first of all, show that you're weak and see what happens. You want to test them; you don't want to get attached to them.

Build a reputation to avoid them

The next thing is to build a reputation to prevent manipulation. Your reputation is what precedes you in life. So to determine manipulation, you must send signals that you are not to be messed around with. You have to send the signals, and you can do that by really taking bold actions. For instance, if you are with someone and you notice that they are starting to get too comfortable with

you and they're starting to be late and get too comfortable, you can break it off. You can tell them that you are done, you don't like this kind of stuff with you, and that you have zero tolerance.

You are telling him that you could dump him any second if he messes around with you. If he's actually playing again, he's going to change that, and he will know that you are not somebody to be messed with. You want to set the tempo from the beginning. If you noticed that he's deviating from your standard and a healthy relationship, then cut him off.

If you see that he wants to act cool on you, then tell him that you are done. The thing is that you have to be willing to fish him out because that is the signal that people feel when you do that. They feel as if you can walk away any second. Most times, people are bluffing, and they show weakness. So, by actually making some bold moves like that, you are actually making them know that you know that they are playing games with you. So, in other words, you should make it like they got you all wrong because they thought that they are good by fucking with you, not knowing that they cannot mess around with you.

Do the subtle thing that suggests that you are about to do it. This tells him that you are not paranoid. So if you're with somebody and you want to communicate with them that you're not happy with how things are going on and you're noticing that he is trying to guilt-trip and he's trying to make you do the things that he wants you to do rather, than say that you are going to leave him. Say subtle things that communicate that you are losing interest in him. For instance, not calling him back and telling him that you're not going to call him back or not calling him back when he texts you. So you're responding in a very direct way, but you respond in a very bland way. The thoughts about you go away. There is no emotion when you text. There is no consistency when you text him. Don't stop till thing, and that will show him that you are losing interest in him. And that you are willing to walk away, and the guy knows that you are willing to walk away because of your past action.

Now since you are showing that you're losing interest, the guy will start changing his behavior. So you must show people that you don't need them. You must make them know that you have more

than you are paying and more than you have. So that if you lose them, you will still be ok. This will make them stop such things. If they feel that you are going to dump them, they will respect you more. The feeling that you are about to dump them or the feeling that you are losing interest because of their stupidity will make them respect you. And when they respect you, they will not play these games with you because they know that you're not to be fuck with. It is important to let them know that if they mess with you, you will not be nice anymore, and you'll be downright difficult to deal with. If the fuck with you.

You are going to communicate that you are not easy to deal with. So you have to be like that with yourself, or you have to realize that people are looking for an easy win and if you don't give them a hard time when they are looking for shit, they are going to keep giving you shit because it feels good to put all your problems into someone. So one thing that you can do is that you should tell him a story of how somebody did the same shit and you dump them. You may say, "I remember one time that one dude kept fucking up with me, and I stop going out with him. I literally told him that we are done because he kept being late to the date, and I found it disrespectful". And he might say, "for real, you dumped him, and you will say yes if somebody messes with me, I will dump him." I am I like you a lot for one second, but if I feel that you are disrespecting me and you are playing games with me, then I will be done with the relationship".

Then you can just change the topic, and in his mind, he will know that you are no joke and that you're not a person to you fuck with. That's one way to do it. Tell them a story in the past of how you dump somebody that fucked with you.

Know how you feel around them

Now the best way to catch them is by knowing how you feel around them. So, you have to be aware of the way you are feeling around them. Usually, they make you feel discomfort around them. Also, they try to put you down. They make you hurt, and you find yourself thinking about what they said for a long time or finding out that they said some things that hurt you, even though you did not feel it during the conversation. Their behavior is recurrent, which means they try to do it repeatedly. They also push you to do

things for them, and they only appreciate you when you do what they want.

They are moody about you. Today, you are the best person in the world; and the next day, they cannot believe that you exist in the world. What they really do is that they pretend to be on your side while they're working behind your back. They work behind your back subliminally, and they do that when they find out you are vulnerable. They don't hurt you directly, but they hurt you sublimely, and they do that to serve their real purpose. When you start to know them, they really become aggressive whenever they are confronted or whenever they're told that they are wrong. Whenever they feel that they will lose an argument or when they feel that you are winning the argument, they become very aggressive. You can also tell this kind of people through the words that they use, that they try to manipulate you.

They try to look really innocent and easy going with you. They tell you that they are not trying to put you down, but then they say something hurtful or negative to you. They start by putting you at ease and tell you that they are not trying to hurt you, that they really like you. Sometimes when you actually face them or confront them with what they are doing, they start telling that it is your fault. That what you did is making them act that way.

They even make you pity them by saying that they hate themselves because of how you make them feel or how you behave with them because you are not giving them all to supposed to give them. You should watch for any subtle statement or sarcasm that tries to put you down. These people are very dangerous when they are in contact with you, especially when they're your close friend, a boss, a co-worker, a wife, or a husband.

Run for your life

If you know someone like this, try to run for your Life stays away from this kind of Personality because they can do some psychological damage to you. Sometimes you may not be able to run away from this kind of person. You might start thinking about someone who will make you feel hot and uncomfortable, but you are not sure why. It is because they're manipulators. They are extremely smart. If they are in business, they are in a leadership position. And because they know how to manipulate and deceive

others, they use it to get to what they need in your organization. Most people will actually have values, and they will trespass on the values just to get their own personal game. This type of person will do anything in their power, whether ethical or let go to get what you want. They are in your personal life and in your workplace. Then now, how do you deal with this kind of manipulative people.

Develop the right attitude

First, you have to develop the right attitude; you have to know that they are one of the most difficult people to deal with. So, you should remember that it is not your fault about the way they're behaving or a reaction to something bad that you have done even if they try to convince you that it is. Another thing you should remember is that you can never win the first square against them, so don't even do that because they don't even play fair, instead what they do need is to be able to maneuver you were around them and also had them.

Remember never to get absorbed by their drama, no matter how good they are. Do not allow them to find the stage for the fight because sometimes, they try to prepare, organize, and then set up a fight in a way to favor them. And also, do not trust anything that they say to you.

No matter what they say to you, they are sick. You should also have the right preparation and learn about their tactics. You need to learn about how they act around you. Try to expose them. Learn about them than about what they really are. Also, have social support around you that works which are people who support you and are positive around you. This will help to remove the effects of somebody who is cunning and deceitful. If you can seek help from a supervisor from somebody, then seek help from somebody in authority or somebody who can help you and guide you whether it's a friend or your doctor. It is ok to seek help. It doesn't mean that you are weak.

Engage in physical activity

The next thing is to do a lot of activities that boost you morally, like sports. Sports are very good to help you feel good about yourself. Try to have routines, and disciplines that will help you build confidence in yourself, remember that it's not your fault you there, but that does not mean that you are a terrible person that or you

are weak. Or that you are bad. If you feel that, then act. Just get up then from the scenario and trying to find smart ways to deal with that hurtful situation again. Most people fall into the trap of such personalities. Think about the right action.

Set the Rules of Engagement

One of the right actions to take is to set the Rules of Engagement. When you are dealing with such a person, make sure that you set the rules of engagement in your favor in a way that you will not get hurt. Do not allow them to drag you into their manipulation. Point out the inappropriate behavior. If they do something that does not make you feel comfortable, point it out, bring it up, and insist that they stop that abusive behavior. If they don't stop their behavior, then do not fight with them because you cannot win against them.

Refuse to engage in them refuse to tolerate that behavior tells them exactly what you want them to do or what you don't want them to do. You should remember that they can't be outsmarted. Most of them are spoilt kids. So, speak to their sick mind and tell them what it is for them. Prepare very well against them before having any engagement with them. Try to minimize engagement with them. Give them what they want, so that they will give you what you want. Do not give them anything free. Do not excuse their actions, no matter what they do will not excuse them. Even if what they are saying is relevant or true, know that it is he will put you down and able to manipulate you. They are not hurt by what you are doing. And feeling guilty.

They pretend to be hurt so that you will feel guilty, and they will control you. You will mostly see these people at work. And most people do not fit this description, but many people do. So, if you're confronted and have to deal with people like this, then you have to be able to trust your gut feeling. Sometimes we tell ourselves that we are doing something wrong because they are very good at manipulating you. So, you have to be able to protect yourself you need to have your own strategy on how to deal with them.

Do not be naive why most people are good at their Hearts. This kind of person is not good at the heart. Remember that not everybody will see their deception because they try to create that deception around you. So that you will doubt yourself they might not use, they are tricky on everybody at the same time. They chose

their victims carefully. So do not assume that you'll be able to change them; nobody can change them. Even psychologists can fall into their trap occasionally.

Share your experiences

One way that you can do this and help is to share your experiences. Most people are dealing with this kind of thing daily, and it is not easy to deal with. So if you are sharing your experiences with other people, you be able to help other people with ideas, tips, and tricks that you have tried that worked, and things that try did not work.

Manipulation is a major problem even if it is only one person at work that it is doing all these things to you. They will turn your workplace into a very difficult, uncomfortable environment. Also, if you have this kind of person at home, they will turn your home environment into a very toxic, unhealthy environment. The world today has produced more of this kind of people than ever because of the corruption that is around us. We also have the same situation around the world because of the high mentality right now.

Almost Everybody now does things because of himself, and they don't care about whether other people are losing. If they are confronted with their problem, they will try to fight you, and they will never admit it. So don't waste your time doing that. Instead, become the enemy, and when you become the enemy, You will be put under scrutiny and put you under their deceitful ways. They always find excuses not to believe you, or to even make it out yourself by saying that this is a waste of time what does this people know it is not me that has the problem it is you that has the problem. You should also try to pray and ask God for help always and it will help you get confident and overcome this kind of hurdles.

Chapter 64. Tips & Tricks

Change of environment

Often times, the environment that you are in can determine how people respond to your requests. In a business environment such as the workplace, it is likely that your colleague perceives you as rivals or competitors. As such, they might be unwilling to help you out when you ask them for one thing or the other. To get more favorable answers to your requests, consider asking for favors when you are out for drinks or at an office party. Jim from Finance will be more willing to consider your requests to expedite the invoicing process if you ask him after he's had a few beers at a party as compared to when he is at the office and buried in paperwork. This is because he perceives you as less of a rival when he is having a good time. While at the office breaking his back, Jim considers you as part of the reason why he cannot get home on time.

Make it about the other person

Here's the thing--you are looking to learn how to manipulate people for your own gain, but you do not have to make that your selling point. Nobody will be looking to help you advance your agenda if you let it know that this is your objective from the get-go. You are more likely to experience success with manipulation if you instead set out to help the other person, while also looking to help yourself. When a person feels that you have helped them get what they want, they will be more likely to also help you get what you want, be it knowingly or otherwise. Instead of always asking your colleagues or friends for favors, offer your help from time to time. This way, the next time you need something from them, they will likely be willing to help.

Speak quickly

When people do not understand what you are saying because you are speaking quickly, they will give in to your demands. There are two reasons for this: they might be unable to process what you are saying and do not want to look stupid by asking for clarification, or they do not want to process what you are saying because your energy is overwhelming and they do not want to deal with it. Next time you need someone to do something for you, walk up to them and give them swift instructions on what you need done, and then

walk away. Do not give them too much time to process what you just said. This especially works when you are in an authority position and are giving instructions to your juniors. You are an important person and do not have the time to slowly elaborate every detail. You need them to be quick on their feet to respond to your demands. This is a tactic that salesmen, especially car salesmen, seem to love. By speaking quickly to your customer and rattling off all the details of this and that car, the customer easily becomes overwhelmed and settles on the next choice that is offered. It might not be in the best interest of the customer, but it is definitely in the best interest of the salesman.

Dress nicely

If you want to make a good impression and gain something from making this impression, you must dress well. Whatever stage you are at in your life, you must make an effort to dress well. Nobody pays attention to raggedly dressed people. The only attention you might get is having people clutch their purses tighter when you approach them. In many stories told about con artists, you'll hear their victims say how the con artist seemed like a trustworthy person based on how they presented themselves.

He looked like a nice guy, they say.

You look like a nice guy based on how you present yourself--and clothes have a huge role to play in that. If you want to hear yes more often, invest in some nice clothes and shoes. Keep your hair well-groomed. Buy some nice cologne and maybe a nice watch. The way people treat you when you are well put together is different from how they treat you when you look like you have put zero effort in your overall look. A well-groomed gentleman who smells nice and looks great will have an easier time getting what he wants from a woman as opposed to a man who looks like he crawled out of a hole. And remember, you do not have to buy designer labels or the most expensive outfits on the planet to make a great impression--you just have to make it seem like you did.

If you do not believe that dressing nicely works, consider this--studies have shown that males who show up in court well-dressed and clean-shaven tend to get more lenient sentences. If dressing nicely works to your advantage in a court of law, there is no reason why it will not work in your everyday life.

Scare tactics

Nobody likes to be caught flat-footed. Human beings have a survival instinct that includes wanting to be prepared against everything and anything that might be harmful to them. In the world of marketing and advertising, the fear of the unknown is used on a daily basis to convince consumers to spend their money on certain products and services. All you need to do is convince the said consumer that there is a very high likelihood that a particular thing will go wrong and that they need to be prepared for this likelihood by buying your product or service. If human beings did not have a fear of the unknown (and the desire to survive the unknown), the insurance business would not exist. If the insurance business has made it so far, you can also ride on scare tactics and convince people that they need you for an elaborate number of reasons. This tactic works really well if you are hoping to manipulate people into accepting a solution that you are offering. It could also work in personal and workplace relationships depending on the context and the angle you work it.

Consistency is key

There is a saying that goes like this: a person who is nice to you but rude to the waiter is not a nice person. This is something that you must always remember when you are trying to step up your manipulation game. You must remain consistent in your behavior when interacting with everyone around you, regardless of whether that person is your target or not. Consistency is important because you need everyone to think that you are a nice person. If people have conflicting impressions of you based on behavioral mistakes that you have made, the red flags will start to go up. Red flags are the stop signs that will prevent your potential assets and victims from assisting you in furthering your agenda. Stay consistent. Speak the same way to everyone. Let everybody think of you as the charmer who always has a nice thing to say about everyone. You'll win more people over this way, and once you do, you will have an even larger pool of people to manipulate.

Silence is golden

Silences make most people uncomfortable. Sometimes, the most effective thing you can do to get information from someone is to remain silent. This way, the other person will be compelled to fill this silence with some talk, thus giving you an opportunity to

gather as much information as you want. The trick is to ensure that you say enough so that you encourage them to keep talking. For example, you can repeat the last bit of every statement they make so that they keep on adding more information. An example:

I ran into Robert yesterday.

Robert?

Yes, at the new Chinese restaurant.

Chinese restaurant?

Yes, the one that opened down the street last month. I was having lunch with a friend.

Notice how you have been able to gather additional information without giving anything for in return. You can keep this going for a while, but you do not want to overdo because then it becomes awkward.

Play nice

This tip is somewhat related to tip number 6, but also somewhat different. Here's why: in order to get what you want out of people, you must have the patience to play nice even when you are screaming internally. Even the nicest people have their breaking points, and some people seem to have the talent to push you over the edge. You must be careful to always stay positive and begin your conversations on a positive note even when you are nearing your boiling point. For example, if you want a colleague to do something for you (for example, correct a report that they have messed up on), you'll want to phrase your statement in a way that absolves them of the majority of the guilt. For instance, instead of telling them that they are a dummy and have mixed up all the numbers, ask them whether they sent the right report and if they would like to take a second look and send another version. This gets you what you want without making the other person feel foolish, and this is exactly what you want as you need to be able to keep getting what you want from this individual.

Replace the I don't think this is right with have you considered...?

Carry your cross

There are certain things that you can do that will make people automatically assume that you are a good and trustworthy person, even when really you are not. For instance, wearing a cross necklace or rosary will make others assume that you are a well-meaning Christian with good morals. Once people make this assumption about you, they will lower their defenses when around you and you can manipulate them to do as you wish.

A lot of men have figured out that the accessories that you carry along with you can influence the kind of interactions they have with other people (read women). It is for this reason that you will find some men walking their cute dogs (even when they are not really interested in the dog) or taking their pretty nieces along to social events because these two accessories (while not really store-bought accessories) give a great boost to their appeal. A man with either of these two accessories automatically comes across to most women like a decent, nurturing and well-grounded guy who can make a good father to a baby, be it a real one or a fur baby. This might not necessarily be the case, but it is a ploy that has worked for the longest time and continues to be effective to date.

This tip does not require you to borrow your nieces or nephews. The point here is that you can create an illusion of who you are by incorporating a few things in your being.

Talk that talk

If you sound smart, everybody assumes that you are smart. If you are not articulate with your words and like to use filler words like a teenage girl would, nobody is going to take you seriously. Widen your vocabulary by listening to great speakers and reading books. Watch documentaries about important topics so that you can have serious dinner conversations without seeming like you are out of your depth. People tend to trust intelligent-sounding people, and you need to ensure that your smarts earn you this trust. Sounding intelligent has nothing to do with using big words. In fact, the more you use ridiculous sounding words, the lower your credibility dips. Learn to be measured in your intellect. You do not want to use up all your big words in one night. Come the next night, you will have nothing left to use.

Put the data aside

Some people will never be convinced unless you have a set of data to back up your claims. Your CEO, for instance, wants numbers and

not stories about how you embarked on a marketing campaign that won over customers. Top level management wants to be convinced that you are doing your job by looking at the numbers that you have to show them. However, the vast majority of people don't care for numbers and prefer stories. If you are speaking in front of an audience, you stand to influence them more if you rely on anecdotes to push your message. Anecdotes lend a personal touch to claims and make you seem more relatable. They humanize your message and win you the trust of the audience. Don't worry if you have not had enough experiences to have interesting anecdotes--you can always borrow other people's stories or make up some of your own. It is not a sin to have an imaginative mind.

Be unique but also predictable in a relatable way

As a manipulator, you want to stand out so that you can be remembered, but you also want to blend in so that you do not arouse suspicion. To achieve this balance, you must ensure that you do what everyday people do. Use clichés, talk about predictable topics like the weather and be generally easy-going. This way, you'll be just another guy, and there will be nothing unusual about you. You will have plenty of time to advance your agenda, but in the meantime, you must perfect your ordinary, decent guy or girl act. Learning to blend in also has the advantage of giving you the protection of a crowd around you, so to speak. When you are just another guy (but who is also smart and charming), you will likely have a social group of individuals who are like you surrounding you in your life. Getting to you will be harder as opposed to when you are that guy that sticks out like a sore thumb.

Newbies are easy targets

Newbies, be it at the workplace or any situation, are always eager to come help and fit in because nobody really is a fan of sticking out like a sore thumb. If you have a new intern or colleague at your workplace, this is your lowest hanging fruit as far as getting what you want. You can have this new employee do whatever it is that you want without much resistance. You will, however, have to be careful to not come across as overbearing as you want to be able to use this newbie for as long as you can while having them think that you are looking out for them. In the case of the intern, you can have them perform any tasks that you find unpleasant by disguising it as a learning opportunity. Take them out for pizza once a week, and

you will have a faithful servant for as long as their internship lasts.

[I need your help...](#)

The way you phrase a request can mean all the difference between someone doing it grumpily or happily, or not doing it at all. If you are a boss, your employees already know that they need to abide by your rules, and do as you say. However, phrasing your orders and instructions as requests for help will get you better results and make you come across as a likable person. This is exactly the kind of reputation that will be beneficial to you in the future when you need more things done for you.

Never feel the need to flex your authority muscle all the time. Everybody knows that you are the boss. They do not need to be reminded all the time. In fact, if you come across as that guy who is in charge but is not drunk with power, you will seem more trustworthy. Political leaders have especially mastered the art of making their constituents think that they are just another buddy, but with a better office. They'll attend local events and sit with communities to chat and catch up on a cup of tea. This is just a trick to seem more relatable. At the end of the day, the constituents go to their homes convinced that the politician is just another well-meaning husband and father who wants to transform their community. Only after some years will the constituents realize that they have been duped.

[It's all in the name](#)

People like the sound of their names, especially when it comes from someone they find attractive or superior to them in one way or another. When meeting someone for the first time, repeat their name as many times as you can without making things awkward. Not only will this make you seem like a nice and likable person, but it will also help you remember their name which comes in handy when you need something from them. At work and in other social situations, address people by their names. Walk up to colleagues and call them by name before asking for favors. Get to know your neighbors' names and call them as such. You will have created a bond of familiarity just by this simple gesture, and you can count on this bond to come in handy down the road. At the same time, ensure that these people know your name so that they know you as [insert your name] as opposed to knowing you as just a neighbor or colleague. When people feel some form of familiarity towards you,

they are less likely to say no to you.

Saying no to Liz sounds a whole lot worse than saying no to that girl from accounting. In the first instance, there's a whole feeling person behind the name. In the latter case, there is this nondescript colleague that you couldn't care less for. So, make sure you know people's names and ensure they know yours as well.

Conclusion

Manipulation isn't making people do what you want them to do but to get them to do what you want them to do. But how can you get people to do what you want them to? First, you need to identify their genuine desires and reverse engineer it to achieve what you want.

The closer someone is to you, the easier it is to manipulate this person. So this means that romantic partners are the best to test the secrets of manipulation.

If you want to persuade people, you have to be ready to make people see and feel like it was their decision.

Many people want to manipulate others for short-term gain. However, the genuine art of manipulation is defined by the long game. One has to be patient. The same way professionals make their skills look easy; you need to make manipulation sound easy. But it will take time and patience to learn to execute the manipulation secrets.

One thing about the manipulation that you need to keep in mind is that you should never reveal your true intentions. Maintain your consciousness of how you are making them feel and attempt to manipulate for the best.

Lastly, the more familiar you are with manipulation tactics, the harder it will be for anyone to use them against you. The truth is that manipulators are found everywhere, and they are everyone:

- Your boss
- Your family
- Your boyfriend or girlfriend
- Your workmates
- The media
- 99.99% of people.

It is only the techniques that vary, and now you know what they are.

The next time a person attempts to influence you, you will see it coming from a mile away, and you can either decide to ignore it, or you can choose to call them out on it.